

APRIL, 1943

Fifty Cents

The Old Line

INTERNATIONAL LITERARY ISSUE

Fiction

Drama

Reportage

Poetry

Criticism

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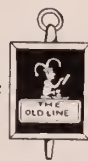


The OLD LINE

INTERNATIONAL LITERARY ISSUE

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

Founded 1930



APRIL, 1943

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EDITOR'S NOTE

In publishing the International Literary Issue of THE OLD LINE we are offering a literary challenge to Hitler's threat to wipe out culture in the modern world. From Latin America, U. S. S. R., England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Belgium, and America come contributions in accord with the theme of the magazine, "Free Literature for a Free World." So far as we know, the publishing of the work of accomplished writers from all over the world together with local material in a student magazine is a unique endeavor in American Universities.

In spite of war shortages and the many current extra demands on time and energy, we found it possible to put together a magazine that is original and important to the expression of the creative intelligence. To us, no literary effort is a marginal activity, but a vital part of the great effort to keep America and the allied powers what they are and what they have been. We have before us Russia's splendid example of prolific writing and publishing in the midst of a war whose front line is within the country. It is interesting to note that many times the people who had had the most gruelling war experiences, or who were serving most valiantly in the armed forces of their country, were found to be the most eager contributors. We offer the Literary Issue as living proof that no amount of physical unrest or mental anguish can destroy the imagination.

Not only did material come from the allied nations, but also from some of the supposedly conquered countries. A poem was smuggled out of occupied France. A poet escaped from Belgium to write of his experiences in a free country. That choice bone of contention, Alsace, is represented. Although Ireland is technically neutral, it seems safe to feel that the Irish support the cause of freedom. From this country also comes poetry to expand the challenge to cultural extinction.

All the authors who have contributed to our magazine have done so without remuneration. We feel that the non-commercial character of the magazine is proof of the present day writer's desire for literary continuance and achievement apart from material considerations.

Because of lack of space, it was impossible to use all of the stories and poems sent in. Our most sincere thanks goes to all of those who responded to our request for material.

Professor Norman Macleod, of the English faculty at the University of Maryland, was responsible for the contacting of all those represented in the magazine. He has offered invaluable assistance, not only in procuring the manuscripts, but also in planning and editing the magazine.

Dr. Charles B. Hale, head of the English Department at the University of Maryland, and Dr. William Peden, Professor of English, are due our thanks for their interest and help in making the publication of the International Issue possible. The *Diamondback* has been helpful with publicity, and the *Footlight Club* gave needful assistance.

We hope that our literary effort to help fight the second great world war will be felt and appreciated by all those who feel that men do have the privilege to think and write as they choose.

SOUTH AMERICA

ECUADOR

JORGE CARRERA ANDRADE:

Uprising

I

Our fathers were going before us
Seeking to ford the spreading twilight,
Their feet freighted with memory.

Eight hundred volunteers. Eight hundred.
The earth was a drum
For the vast beat of our sandals.

Earth, dressed in squares,
You were the prisoner of four men
Even to the ultimate blue of the horizon.

We bore the pulse of the free seeds,
Oh earth, with breasts of vegetation.
The rag of our cries
Was fluttering from the highest pole of the air.

The soldiers with their road of blood
Awakened the green silences of the field.

They were advancing eaten by shadow
And a refrain of ranked teeth
Gnawed at their luminous buckles.

The franciscan eyes of the sown fields
Saw the black twigs of their guns
Go by.

We were traveling escorted by wheatears
With a poncho of light on our shoulders
And the earth's command on our foreheads.

II

Soldiers. Soldiers.
Armies of aimed weapons
Over the humble colors of the fields.

Wandering wall of smoke:
Trapdoor opened in the day.
They kill us from the horizon,
Setting livid stars alight.

Comrades:
The guns look at us with eyes of death.

The world beats in our temples.
The fear of death cries out in our throats.

One must pass quickly over
The silence striped with mortal bengal fires.

Eight hundred we came down from the hills,
Counting our fathers, our mothers
And our tender sons.

At this moment
Almost all are sleeping upon the broad earth.

We bore the pulse of the free seeds,
Oh earth, corraled by the guardian hills.
The song encamped on the shore of the wind.
The gun overthrew our message.

Our dead sleep
Entombed in the vicinity of the sky,
A sweet cosmos flowing from their sides
And with a crown of sweat on their foreheads.

—Translated by H. R. Hays.

PERU

CÉSAR VALLEJO:

Black Stone on White Stone

I shall die in Paris in a heavy shower,
On a day I already remember.
I shall die in Paris—and I do not run away—
Perhaps on a Thursday like today, in autumn.

It will be Thursday because today, Thursday,
As I prose these verses, my bones are aching
And never have I turned like today to see myself
In all my traveling entirely alone.

Cesar Vallejo is dead, they all blamed him
Although he did nothing to them;
They beat him hard with a club, beat him heavily,

And with a rope, too, the witnesses
Are the bones of his arms, Thursdays,
Solitude, rain and highways . . .

—Translated by H. R. Hays.

CHILE

PABLO NERUDA:

The International Brigade Arrives At Madrid

The morning of a cold month,
Of an agonizing month, soiled by mud and by smoke,
A month without knees, a sad month of siege and misfortune,
When across the wet windowpanes of my house the African
jackals were heard

Howling with their rifles and their teeth full of blood,
Then,

When for hope we had only a dream of gunpowder, when we
thought

That the world was full only of devouring monsters and furies,
Then, breaking through the frost of Madrid's cold month, in
the mist

Of the dawn,

I saw with these eyes that I have, with this heart that sees,
I saw the arrival of the staunch ones, the towering soldiers
Of the thin and hard and ripe and ardent brigade of stone.

It was the grievous time when the women
Bore absence like a terrible live coal,
And Spanish death, more acid and sharp than other deaths,
Hovered over fields honored till then by wheat.

Along the streets the broken blood of men mixed
With the water gushing from the shattered heart of houses;
The bones of torn children, the heartrending
Silence in mourning of the mothers, the eyes
Of the defenceless closed forever,
Were like the sadness and the lost, were like a garden spat on,
Were the faith and the flower murdered forever.

Comrades,
Then,
I saw you,
And my eyes are even now filled with pride
Because I saw you across the misty morning coming to the pure
forehead of Castile,
Silent and firm,
Like bells before dawn,
Full of solemnity and with blue eyes coming from far away,
From your corners, from your lost lost countries, from your
dreams
Full of burnt sweetness and guns
To defend the Spanish city in which cornered liberty
Might fall and die bitten by the beasts.

Brothers, from now on
May your purity and your strength, your solemn history,
Be known to child and man, to woman and old man,
May it reach all beings devoid of hope, descend the mines cor-
roded by sulphuric air,
Ascend the inhuman stairs of the slave,
That all the stars, that all the ears of grain of Castile and of
the world
May write your name and your bitter struggle
And your victory powerful and earthly like a red elm.

Because with your sacrifice you have caused to be reborn
The lost faith, the absent soul, confidence in the earth,
And through your abundance, through your nobility, through
your dead,
As through a valley of hard rocks of blood
Flows an immense river with doves of steel and hope.

—Translated by Angel Flores.

WINETT DE ROKHA:

Children of the U. S. S. R.

Against your blossoming heart, hurricane of the west and its
decadences,
Child of blue, sweet compassion, kindled at the northeastern
sun,
Worker of to-morrow,
Master of wheat, of bread, of roofs gay with pigeons,
With the sky for a window.

Century on century your trembling silhouette
Gathered the black thistle of horror from door to door
But the fruitful hand of Lenin
Traced a gigantic furrow in history
From which grew the sturdy tree of laughter.

A song of joy spins in circles
As it comes from a far country with a legendary name
To nest in my breast for many a long day;
And I cherish it like the child I call my daughter
As it overflows with red toward the butterfly of summer.

Vinebreast, fruitpulp, foam, bee and river . . .

—Translated by H. R. Hays.

BRAZIL

JORGE AMADO:

On the Wharf

The man wearing the blue vest did not answer. He stood there
silently with his enormous blue vest hanging over his brown
canvas pants, now browner with dirt.

Outside the night was delightful. The poetry of the night
reached even the greasy showcase with a ray of moonlight which
fell on the stones of the street together with the stars that were
shining through the open doors, with the distant sound of a
guitar that someone was playing, and with the voice of a woman,
a faint mournful voice singing a song about loves lost in her
youth. Perhaps more than the moonlight and the stars, or the
voluptuous perfume of the jasmine in a nearby square, perhaps
more than any of this, the faint voice of the woman singing in
the night aroused the tired hearts of the men who were drinking,
sitting on edges of drawers or leaning against the showcase.

A man wearing a large ring repeated a question which the
man in the blue vest still did not answer.

"How about you, baboon, have you ever had a woman?"

But it was the red-haired man who answered, "Bah, a woman
. . . ! Dozens of women in every port. The woman who never
wants a sailor is batty. I, on my part, have had dozens . . ."

He made a gesture with his hands, opening and closing his
fingers. A streetwalker spit through her loose teeth and looked
at the red-headed sailor with interest.

"The heart of a sailor is like the waves that come and go on the
sea. I knew Joe from Santa well enough. He wasn't shut up on
a ship one day that he didn't . . ." she said.

"And furthermore," continued the sailor, "a man of the sea
can't stick to any one woman. One day he goes away, his de-
sires aren't satisfied; another comes along and attracts him.
Woman, my dear, is an evil more treacherous than a hurricane."

Now the ray of moonlight tried to come through the door,
lighting the boards of the greasy floor. The man with the large
ring grabbed the blue vest as if it were dried meat that he was
going to cut.

"Speak up, baboon," he said. "Doesn't he look exactly like a
baboon? Did you ever see anybody who looked so much like a
baboon? Have you ever had a woman?"

The prostitute burst out laughing, put her arm around the red-
haired sailor's neck and they laughed together. The man with
the blue vest drank the rest of the brandy in his glass, wiped
his mouth on the sleeve of his baggy coat, and said, ". . . you
don't know where she was; she was very far away from here, in
another port, in a much larger country. She was in a cafe. I
remember the name, 'The New World'."

The man with the big ring, pounding on the table, asked for
more brandy.

"I knew her girl friend; there were two of them and a fellow;
I was drinking with a friend and talking about the sorrows of
life. They say that there is no such thing as love at first sight,
but it's a lie."

The streetwalker squeezed the stout arm of the red-haired
sailor a little tighter and leaned her head against his. The voice
of the woman who was singing suddenly filled the dirty barroom.

"She went away never to return . . ."

They were still listening. The man with the big ring sipped
his brandy in little gulps as if it were a rare liqueur, while he
waited eagerly for the man in the blue vest to continue.

"What happened?" he asked, wiping his mouth on the sleeve
of his coat.

"The moon is big and beautiful. I haven't seen it like that for
a long time," sighed the prostitute, clinging to the red-head.

"Tell it! Tell the rest of it!" shouted the man with the big
cheap ring.

"That's how it was. As I have said, I was with a friend taking
a drink. And he was complaining about life; his wife with bad
health, little money . . . It was sad; I was unhappy too. Then
she came in. She was with some other people; have I already
said that?"

"Yeah, you said it," answered the red-haired sailor, who was
beginning to get interested in the story.

Then the Spaniard, the owner of the place, leaned over the
counter to listen.

The fellow with the blue vest thanked the red-headed sailor for
his help and continued:

"That's how it was. She came with a girl and a man. I knew
the other girl; I had met her a few times before. But, listen, I
hardly saw the girl I knew; I only saw her."

"Was she a blonde?" asked the man with the big fake ring,
who had a weakness for blondes.

"Blonde? No. She wasn't a blonde or a red head either, but
it's funny, she looked like a foreigner, somebody from another
country."

"I know how it is . . ." said the red head, who was a sailor
on a freighter on the high sea.

The man in the blue vest thanked him again with a gesture.
The streetwalker, leaning against the sailor murmured, "You
know it all. Look at the moon," she smiled. "It's gorgeous,
gorgeous and so yellow . . ."

"It's like this boy says . . ." said the man in the blue vest
pointing to the sailor with his lip. "She looked like a tourist off

a ship coming from far away. I don't know how she got there. It seemed that my friend went over to talk to the other girl. Then she introduced us; we started to talk That's only what I dream, he still dreams that it happened, I swear I didn't really meet her . . . I only saw her and she wasn't talking, only laughing; her white teeth, whiter than the sand on the shore My friend was talking, telling his troubles. The other girl was talking too; she thought she was consoling him, but I don't know. She and the fellow were quiet, but she was laughing." He smiled remembering it and said beaming, "And she was smoking real fast. Her eyes" His hands shook. "But it seems like the end of a story that black Asterio would tell aboard a Swedish ship, the one that sank in the mouth of the Coqueiros"

The man with the ring moved his foot through the ray of moonlight, spit, and asked, "And the drunk that was with her was master of this sailor girl?"

"Well, he had an indifferent manner. Besides, he seemed to be with her friend the one thing that I know is that she was laughing, those white teeth, her white face, those eyes"

Now he put his hands through the button-holes of his blue vest, not knowing what else to do with them until he decided to empty his glass of brandy.

"And then?" the man with the big ring wanted to know.

"They paid for their drinks, and the three of them walked out. I left too I went back to that cafe many times. Once I saw her again. She came from far away, I'm sure. From very far; she wasn't from there"

"What a lovely moon!" said the streetwalker with sad eyes. She wanted to say something else, but found no words.

"From far away, how do I know if it was from the bottom of the sea? I only know that she came in and she went away. I know only that. She didn't even notice me. Until today I had forgotten the way she laughed, her teeth, the way she smoked so fast. And her dress." He almost cried with joy upon remembering another detail. "Her dress with open sleeves"

He drained his glass, smacked his lips, but he still wasn't happy. The voice of the woman singing in the delightful night was fading away, stopping little by little.

"She went away, never to return"

"And then?" the man with the big ring asked anew.

The man in the blue vest did not answer and the prostitute didn't know whether he was looking at the moon or at something that she couldn't see there, farther than the moon and the stars, farther than the sky, farther than the tranquil night. She never did know. She wanted to cry, but before the tears came, she went with the red-headed sailor to the fiesta of the full moon.

The Spaniard leaned over the counter to hear the adventures of the man with the big fake ring, but the man in the blue vest was changed, indifferent, looking at the yellow moon in the sky. The man with the big ring interrupted the story about a harlot who sang, making gestures, and turning to the Spaniard, pointed to the man in the blue vest and said, "Doesn't he look exactly like a baboon?"

—Translated by Shirley Armstrong.

MEXICO

RODOLFO USIGLI:

I Am Full of Voices

L'O est noir.

—Rimbaud

Diligently in my ear each day
A Negro angel blows
A soft seabreeze of Os
Without flutes or oboes.

Meteorological and precise
The angel does his daily task;
And I know not if it be
Notice, summons, S O S.

No angel who my infancy
Kept safe in his transparent breast,
Nor he who guards the narrow way
And theological distances.

I know that angel is condemned
To dull and deafen all my senses,
To the hard and forced travail
Of gathering in me the voices

Which chastise and terrify me
With the sound of my own name
Which seems a word from other worlds,
The label of another man.

I know that angel's agony
In a magnetic voice that rings
Now hoped for and now unforeseen,
Now siren-sweet and now lamenting,

In the streets through which I walk
And within my forehead's chasm,
In the silver, in the wine,
In the incandescent spasm.

I am full of voices, filled
With outcries and with moans
And the angel calmly winds me
In a net of tones.

In a sea of shrieks unceasing,
I dream his morning occupation
Is covering my silent body
With trowelfuls of orchestration.

—Translated by H. R. Hays.

U.S.S.R.

F. PANFEROV:

The Murder of Ekaterina

Everybody knew her, not only in her own village of Vilki, but throughout the district. She was tall, red-cheeked and strong, but above all she was lively, with a retentive mind and a pure, generous heart. Ekaterina never did anything against her conscience, not for anybody.

"Ekaterina is a woman you can rely on," people said of her. "Nobody can equal her in the field, and at a public meeting, if an opinion has to be expressed, she's the one to do it and she won't mince matters either."

"Yes, she's a corking woman."

And, true enough, when she did speak up at a meeting, her voice rang, and then people who had shirked their work had better beware; she'd put anybody to shame, irrespective of whether the person in question was just a plain, ordinary collective farmer or an official of the local authorities.

That's why Lyubin, the local agronomist, who was a quiet sort of fellow, called her aside and said to her in a whisper:

"Ekaterina Petrovna! You are a gifted woman! You come from the land and your brain, well, it's like the richest black earth: sow and what a harvest you'll reap. But" he dropped into a more familiar tone, "but must you forever be lashing out and pushing ahead of everybody else? Do you need more than anybody else?"

"More," Ekaterina replied. "I have three sons and four daughters."

"You know best" the agronomist replied gruffly, and stooping slightly, he walked on.

"The truth will always beat a path for itself," she flung after him, "so put that in your pipe and smoke it, Comrade Agronomist!"

And when many of the menfolk, including Ekaterina's three sons, were called up to the army, the chairman of the collective farm, who had also been called up, declared with the agreement of all the collective farmers:

"By all rights you should be the chairman. Keep the flag flying, Ekaterina Petrovna."

From then on Ekaterina handled the affairs of the collective farm.

"A fine one they've elected," Lyubin grumbled. "A woman like that should be bearing children!"

"A fine one this agronomist of ours," Ekaterina said of him in the same jocular tone. "A man like that should be strumming on a mandolin."

But when they were out in the fields they instinctively turned to each other: Lyubin was no good at speaking to the collective farmers, Ekaterina lacked the knowledge the agronomist Lyubin had, and that's why she always advised the collective farmers: "The fact that his hands are as slender as a girl's doesn't mean a thing. He knows his job: he's a wizard in the field and you should listen to what he says."

One rainy morning the Germans swooped down on the village of Vilki. The main body of troops passed to the right, leaving in the village a group of forty soldiers and a certain Karl Klaus. This same Karl Klaus, slashing the calves of his fat legs with the butt end of his whip, inspected the collective farm, took a long look at the fields and then, clicking his tongue, he said something to Neumann, the interpreter—a man with an ashen gray face and quick and nervous movements. Neumann bowed deferentially to Klaus and then turning to Ekaterina, who had just come out of the barn, he shouted:

"All this—the fields, the woods, the river—is very much to Herr Karl Klaus' liking. Eh, what!"

"I should think so"

"He was promised, you know, two hundred hectares of land together with farm hands, Russians, of course, to work the land for him."

"Well, what of it? Promises are not always kept," Ekaterina replied with a sneer.

"Yes, yes. He likes it very much," Neumann shouted.

Ekaterina walked gloomily through the village. Her heart contracted painfully, as though it were bleeding. In front of the collective farm office she sat down on a log.

"And a swine like that is going to reap the fruit of our labor," she thought. She went from house to house and tapping on the windows, told the owners to pass on the order not to turn up for work.

That evening the inhabitants of the village of Vilki were rounded up in front of the office of the collective farm. They were surrounded by a cordon of armed soldiers. Klaus, looking as dapper as ever, appeared on the porch accompanied by Neumann, the interpreter. Karl Klaus looked long and searchingly at the collective farmers. A smile hovered on his lips. Then, shrugging his shoulders, he said something to Neumann. The latter began to speak rapidly:

"Herr Karl Klaus is very sorry that he cannot speak Russian. He is very fond of you and will always be fond of you. But you must not shirk your work, the corn must be threshed and stored in the barn."

The collective farmers listened in silence, keeping their eyes on the ground. And in that tense silence Ekaterina's voice rang out challengingly:

"Yes, he's fond of us, like a wolf is of sheep! But we're not sheep!"

Neumann translated Ekaterina's words. A quiver ran down Klaus' body, his face turned livid. Then, with a forced smile, he snapped out an order to the soldiers. The soldiers immediately lifted their rifles and a machine gun was rolled out from the courtyard. The agronomist Lyubin, in order to dispel the threatening atmosphere, bawled out:

"The corn? Of course the corn has to be threshed. Who'd refuse to do that? And even Ekaterina Petrovna . . ."

Klaus waved his whip. The soldiers lowered their rifles; the machine gun was rolled out of sight. Klaus brought the palms of his hands flabbily together, applauding and nodding approvingly to Lyubin. When he did that, the agronomist experienced such a feeling of nausea as though he had struck a helpless child.

But just the same, nobody turned up for work the next morning. The evening before when they were dispersing from the meeting, Ekaterina had gone up to the agronomist and, swaying on her heels as if she was about to hit him in the face, she said:

"Shall I spit in your mug? That wouldn't be enough. You old washout!"

"Katya! Katyusha!" — the agronomist touched her sturdy shoulders and she could see how his hands trembled. "Do you really want them to put daylight through us like a bunch of fools? We've got to think how to wriggle out of the situation. What's to be done? Give us your orders!"

"Set fire to everything! Set fire to the corn in the stacks! If you won't do it, they'll do it," Ekaterina said, pointing to the people. "If they won't do it, my girls will do it. If my girls won't do it, I'll tackle the job myself and set fire to the corn."

Everybody agreed with her.

Karl Klaus realized that everything depended on Ekaterina and that evening he made his way to her house, wearing the same smug smile, confident that he would be able to bring the "stubborn lady" to reason.

Ekaterina was not surprised at the visit; she had expected it and that was why, the previous evening, she had told her

daughters to hide in the woods. When Klaus came she was ready for him.

The interpreter Neumann said:

"Karl Klaus wants the corn threshed."

"We know what's to be done with our own corn without you," she retorted. Klaus became furious. Neumann again translated:

"Herr Karl Klaus says that the land attached to your village, the fields, the woods, the corn in the stacks and in the barns, the livestock and everything else, all belong to him: it was given to him by the Fuehrer, by Hitler."

"Let him first sow himself and whatever he gets he can make a present of," Ekaterina replied and turned towards the window.

Klaus nervously tapped his fat calves with the butt end of his whip and then, swinging up his arm, he lashed out at Ekaterina's face. Blood spurted from her cheek. Klaus flung out of the house and in the street he shouted to the interpreter:

"Make her submit! Don't kill her, but make her obey! Make her obey first and finish her off."

An hour or so later Neumann was back again accompanied by two soldiers. He put a sheet of paper on the table in front of Ekaterina and said gruffly:

"Hey! You! You Vixen. Put your signature to this. We don't require anything more from you."

Ekaterina glanced through the paper—it was an order to the collective farmers instructing them to turn up for work.

"I didn't write it so I don't have to sign it."

"The worse for you. You'll be ashamed of yourself."

"Why do I have to be ashamed of myself?"

"You are a mother and I know you have daughters."

A half-surprised moan burst from Ekaterina's lips. She sat down on a stool and looked pensively out of the window. One thought was in her mind: "Did my girls manage to get away?"

"Sign and have done with it," Neumann said, moving the paper over to her.

Ekaterina took it and again looked out of the window, her mind busy with one and the same thought: if only they'd managed to get away she'd know how to settle with this creature.

Neumann saw the struggle that was going on in Ekaterina's mind and he became still more insolent. Going up to Ekaterina he patted her on the shoulder with his flabby hand.

"Eh-eh-eh! Why should you care about that stacked corn? Your girls are more precious than anything to you: you're their mother. I, too, am a father and to me my children are the most precious things on earth. That's how things are. Now put your signature to it, otherwise your daughters will cease to respect you."

Ekaterina's heart boiled over.

"Our girls are taught to respect honest people and to have a contempt for cowards, particularly for rats like you," and, crumpling up the sheet of paper, she threw it into Neumann's face.

"A-aa! You crazy fool! Strip her!" he shouted to the soldiers. "Strip her and turn her into the street."

The soldiers, evidently, knew what was expected of them. In spite of the fact that the order was given in Russian, they hurled themselves at Ekaterina and ripped off her clothes. They grabbed her with their foul hands, twisted her arms, pinched her, punched her on the back, and when her thick braids of hair unloosened and fell down her bare back Neumann set fire to them.

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EUGENE VOROBYOV:

The Bunch of Keys

I had a tin of canned fish. I was just about to open it with my straight back knife when my companion protested:

"Wait a minute! I have a can opener."

The two of us were chance acquaintances brought together by the war, and were now sitting on the roadside, feet dangling over the edge of a culvert. We had run across each other early in the morning outside Dorogobuzh and since then had been tramping the roads of the frontal zone together. Both of us were headed for the same unit.

My companion dug into his pocket and emptied its contents onto the grass. There were some coat buttons, a grenade detonator, a cigarette holder, a ring of keys, some pistol cartridges, a stub of a pencil, and the promised can opener.

I picked it up, and my companion began to return his simple treasure to his capacious pocket.

When he came to the keys, he held them in his hand for a moment and paused.

"The house keys," he explained. "Thirty-one Gorky Street, Apartment Nine, Minsk."

Sunk in thought, he fingered the keys for a moment.

"This big one is from the front door downstairs, and this from the Yale lock on the apartment door. This belongs to Lucy's room, and this, to my desk . . . You know," he said with a rueful smile, "I'd hate to lose these keys. Of course, the house may have burned down, but maybe it hasn't and I'll certainly be going back to Minsk."

And he carefully put the keys back into his pocket.

YEVGENY PETROV:

The Professor of Music

This simple soldier had a fine, very expressive face; his long hair hung down over his ears; and his fingers were what are generally called artistic. True they were dirty and cracked, but they preserved their sensitiveness and suppleness. He was continually fingering the edges of his greatcoat, which was several sizes too large for him.

He was a musician from the town of Kassel, by name Reinhardt Raif; he was young, only twenty-eight years old, but he had already had some success in life. He had finished the piano-forte and violin courses at the College of Music, and very soon afterwards had become a professor of theory in the same College at Kassel. He was conscripted in 1939, and since that time had carried out every sort of job behind the lines. One day he was sent to the Soviet-German Front, and immediately gave himself up.

"This war, it is terrible," he said; "I never imagined anything like it."

A very characteristic remark. They all expected to find in Russia what they had found in France—plenty of champagne and a scarcity of opposition. After being flooded with their own blood, they realized their mistake. Reinhardt Raif did not take very long to decide for himself the question of peace and war. He quite simply chose peace. He had already lost the fear of death, and was now experiencing the pleasure of security.

I questioned him: "What is your attitude to the Hitler regime?"

"Oh, all that sort of thing—politics—does not interest me in the least. There's only one thing in the world for me—music."

"You're quite a young man. You grew up and were formed under Hitler's rule. It's impossible that you should be quite unaffected by Hitlerism."

"Put it this way," said the young man, with a pleasant smile. "I have only one love—music; nothing else exists for me."

I tried to see things from his point of view. Perhaps he is genuinely convinced that music and politics are incompatible. Music is—well, just music. Rather strange to be talking of music while not far away a fierce battle was raging, and the windows of the hut where we were talking rattled every now and then, because the Junkers have a habit of dropping bombs when no one asked them to. Yet music is a very pleasant subject to talk about.

"Let's talk about music," I said.

"With the greatest of pleasure," he replied.

"What do you think of French music?"

"I beg your pardon: French music?"

"Yes."

He was struck dumb. For a time he just stared at me in sheer amazement. Then, apparently remembering that he was a prisoner, he said very gently: "But there is no music in France."

"How do you mean, no music?"

He looked at me a little pityingly, and repeated: "There is no French music."

"Don't you know one French composer? Can't you name a single one?"

"N-no," he replied, shrugging his shoulders and clearly trying to remember. "French? N-no, I don't know of any."

"Fine!" cried a commander, a major, who had come into the hut and obviously did not approve of this conversation about music. "Gounod's *Faust* and Bizet's *Carmen*! A fine teacher of music. He's simply lying, he's no sort of a musician."

"Just a moment," I said, and turned to the prisoner: "But you know some Russian composers?"

"Russian? Certainly! Who doesn't. Chaikovsky!"

"Of course! Yes. And what did Chaikovsky write?"

"The Fifth and Sixth Symphonies. They are works of genius."

"Do you know what your soldiers and officers did at Kline, in Chaikovsky's house, where he wrote those works of genius?"

I gave him a brief account of what I had seen.

"How horrible!" he said. "It was probably as you say."

It was quite obvious that he knew very well what the German troops were capable of.

"Well, and what else did Chaikovsky write?"

The musician was silent.

"Surely you are not ignorant of it. Have you never been told?"

The musician shrugged his shoulders.

"He's lying," muttered the major angrily. "He's no sort of musician."

"What other Russian composers can you name?"

Reinhardt Raif puckered his brow and thought, trying hard to remember.

"Chaikovsky," he said, ". . . and that fellow . . . another musical genius . . ."

He waved his hand, but could not remember.

"All right, we'll leave Russian and French music. There is this about it, that this music belongs to your enemies" (an appealing gesture from the musician). "Now, here's your ally—Italy. Do you like Italian music?"

"Oh, Italian music. Yes, I like Italian music very much."

"Splendid. I like it too. Tell me about the Italian composers, and name their works."

"Verdi," he blurted out at once. He wrote *Aida*."

"That's correct. What else did Verdi write?"

"*Aida*," repeated the professor of the theory of music, "and then . . ." He waved his hand. I already knew what that meant.

"Verdi wrote dozens of operas, and half of them are world famous. Any first-year student in any music school can recite their names. All right, let's leave Verdi for a while. After all, there's not only Verdi in Italy. Name some more Italian composers."

"Rossini. He wrote a very fine opera . . . Why, it's gone clean out of my head!"

"Well, when all's said and done, the name is not very important. Let's call it *The Barber of Seville*. Tell me the theme of that opera."

The musician from Kassel said nothing. He had gone very red. There were beads of sweat on his brow.

"You know," he said, "everything is so easily forgotten at the Front."

"What's that! Even music is forgotten?"

"Music is never forgotten. I remember Rossini's music very well."

"Good. Sing me any melody from any of Rossini's works."

There was a very uncomfortable pause. At last the musician cleared his throat, spat, and said: "You know, I've caught a cold at the Front. Your Russian weather is so terribly cold that . . . hm!"

He pointed to his throat, as much as to say; "Ask me anything you like, but I just can't sing."

I took a piece of paper, and drew on it five lines, with a flowing treble clef, and held out the paper to Hitler's musician.

"Please write down any melody of Rossini."

The soldier blushed furiously. At last he said: "I don't know one."

"Well, you tell me you like *Aida*. Write down any melody from *Aida*."

"I can't," he muttered.

"All right; put down any melody by any foreign composer."

An oppressive pause.

"I've already told you that he isn't a musician at all!" the major burst out.

But think of it, comrades, he really was a musician. He wasn't telling lies; he was telling the plain truth.

I wrote down the whole of my conversation with the young man with shorthand accuracy. It turned out later that the young man had an excellent knowledge of German music, that he really had finished at a Hitler College, and had later become a teacher there.

It's a terrifying fact. At a tender age this musically gifted man had entered a sort of musical concentration camp, where German music was the only music. From everything else created by man in the realm of music, from everything else beautiful in the world, he had been shut off, as if by barbed wire. So Hitler had got what he wanted. He brought up this ignoramus, who was convinced that there is only Germany in the world, that no other country has or can have its own art, that every other land must be nothing more than Germany's slave. Now as a prisoner, he certainly had his tail between his legs. You see, he loved music, and politics meant nothing to him. It meant nothing to him that a gang of criminal maniacs had turned a thing of such universal importance as musical education into

an instrument of national oppression, and hence of piracy and robbery.

For a long period of years there have been trained in cold blood in Central Europe millions of assassins. It was necessary to train them in such a way that nothing and no one could move them to pity; it was necessary to make it clear to them that the Germans are the only people capable of creating cultural treasures. The whole of the rest of the world consists simply of two-legged creatures incapable of anything. This young ignoramus believed absolutely sincerely that there is no French music; how many other young German blockheads are there absolutely certain that in France, in Russia, in England, in America, even in Italy, there is neither painting, nor science, nor theatre, nor cinema, nor literature?

For a long time we could not realize this. We did know it, but we could not believe it, since it was beyond our understanding. Our imagination created for us a young German whom it would not be too difficult to educate. But we could not grasp the idea that Hitler has long since turned the youth of German into anthropoid apes, who have learnt nothing more than how to wear trousers, shave themselves, shout "Halt!" and "Get back!" fire automatic weapons, and hate the whole human race.

LEO KASSIL:

One Quarter of an Hour

They'd gone! And I was in a great hurry. They had said: "In a quarter of an hour." I don't know how much time had passed. It was some minutes before I fully remembered. Many minutes were wasted, gone from the short space that they had left me to live, and only then did I see perfectly clearly that we should not get out alive.

"Keep away! Keep away from this house, friends! Get away quickly and keep right away! There's a mine here!"

Now I will explain everything, if there's time. They had gone and left us behind—little Tatiana and me. They had gone, and they had got nothing out of me. How they had tried to get information doesn't bear remembering . . . But I said nothing. Tell Nilon Matveyevitch and Tarasov and Sonia Ivanovna, I said nothing.

It was two days after I fell into their hands. I could not stay in the cellar any longer. In my arms little Tanya was burning with scarlet fever. I went out at night to find the doctor. They were firing all round, and the whole town was rocking and burning with a deadly glow like my little Tatiana. I just ran, stepping over the heads of the people lying in the streets, bending and slipping under the feet of those swinging from posts. As I ran I thought to myself: "Not everyone's killed or is killing; there must be some people who will help me to save my dying child." . . . Well, they caught me; I don't know who informed about me. Whether he did it through fear or for money, may his traitorous soul burn within him while he lives. Anyway, somehow or other, the Germans found out that I was connected with the group. But they wanted to know more—they wanted to know everything—and they learnt nothing.

You know, comrades, a thrashing from the enemy is not really such a disgrace and pain. Waiting for the blow is very much more awful than the pain itself. It is true, comrades! It is only the waiting that is so terrible. How silly is the degrading fantasy with which the slave comforts himself: "The punishment of the kind-hearted doesn't hurt for so long!" How stupid it is! How untrue! If a person I really loved were to lay hands on me I could not bear it. I should hate him for ever. And that wound would never heal. But blows from a cruel, hated enemy, whom you don't even regard as human, merely leave their mark on the body. The heart does not feel it, for in the heart there cries out such proud anger that any pain is silenced.

I bore everything. I want you to know that. Sonia used to say: "Our Antonina is too delicate a creature. She is given too much to refined poetry. I am worried if anything were to happen to her."

Now she need no longer doubt. Something has happened to me, and I have come through. I was quite alone among them; they took Tatiana away somewhere—to the doctor, they said. This evening they had a sort of bazaar, dragging in all sorts of parcels, tearing them open and arguing among themselves. I knew that our people were not far away, but I felt sure that I should never see you again. Then they had to get away in a hurry, so they pushed me into this cellar and made another attempt to get some information out of me quickly. But you can rest assured that they got nothing. And do you know what

they did then? They put under the building a delayed-action mine—a devilish contrivance working by clock-work—and explained to me in detail how it would work; the time goes by, the mechanism works, then I am blown to pieces. However, variations were possible; I might tie a white handkerchief to a small stick, which they politely handed to me, and push it through a little opening high up under the ceiling. That would be a signal that I was giving in. And then, if it was not too late, they would remove the mine, and everything would be all right. I just laughed in their faces. But they were amused, too, and after a minute a junior officer pushed his way into the cellar, a man with a sharp face, like a pike. He was carrying under his arm something wrapped in a dirty, tattered blanket. They threw this bundle into my arms, and at once through the blanket I felt the warmth and palpitation of a body in a terrible fever. It was Tatiana, my Tatiana.

"So that you won't be lonely," said the officer.

I confess; I could not hold out any longer. Forgive me, comrades—I began to implore them, in a moment of weakness; you quite understand—it was my child. I begged them to take the child away, it did not matter where, if only they took her away quickly out of that tomb, where I was being buried alive. Yes, I threw myself on my knees, and cried like a small child, tugged at them, pushed my little girl into their indifferent arms, but they pushed her away as if she were not fit to be touched. Then they went away, carefully locking all the doors.

"A happy sojourn," one of them said.

I don't know how much time has gone by since then; maybe I shall not even finish writing this note. Death may come to me at any moment. They said fifteen—twenty minutes, but I haven't a watch; the junior officer tore it off my wrist, and when I asked what time it was he said: "For you it is all up within a quarter of an hour."

I searched the whole cellar, without letting Tatiana out of my arms, but there was no way out. I want to write to you so much, but the time is so short, and Tatiana's breathing is so difficult; she does not recognize me, the poor feverish little mite. Please don't think to yourself: "What rock-like self-possession! She even finds strength to write!" It is simply that I cannot do otherwise—I want to be with you during these minutes, any one of which may be the last. To speak the honest truth, it is terrifying. But to be a traitor—no! That would be a thousand times more terrible.

How dreadful that ticking is! At first I did not notice it but when they had all gone I suddenly heard it—"Tick, tock, tick, tock"—they had set the clock-work of the mine going. And the noise was hard and unpleasant, with a German accent, "Tick, tock"; I believe there is a German word like that. "Tick, tock," but I can't remember what it means. It sounds somewhere quite close; the mine must be right underneath me; I hear it so distinctly. I would stop my ears, but I have Tatiana in one arm and a pencil in the other hand, and I must try to go on writing to you. Is it true or is it my imagination—that "tick, tock" is getting louder and louder. There's a pendulum there in the mine itself, trying to hurry on our death like a cursed saw, to and fro; tick- tock, to and fro; tick, tock, sawing away our life. Perhaps it all hangs on a hair. It touches; Crash! . . . and the end.

There's some sort of activity and noise in the street. Will our people really be in time? It has got dark in the cellar. Someone has covered the little window up there. No . . . it is not our people. They have come to offer me life again. I ask them not to worry me. They said it would be soon. Again—"Tick, tock, tick, tock."

What is that they are shouting at me from up there? At first I did not understand. Only now have I realized what the man with the ugly, pike's face said to me. Apparently it was only just now that they connected the mine to its clock-work mechanism. That's why they were so brave in coming into the cellar! So the pendulum had been ticking for nothing! So they had simply been having a game with me! All that I had suffered during those two days was not enough for them. But now they had put it in, in good earnest. I could hear them fussing about and how the pike-faced man gave orders.

They had gone. All is quiet. Somewhere, seemingly nearer than ever, is that, "tick, tock, tick, tock."

Did a woman really bear these men? You just can't believe that such people ever had a mother, the wife of a human being. Their foul breed derives from the corpse-eating hyena! I know: you mark my words, friends. And I do not feel sorry for their wives and mothers. If they only have the faintest resemblance to their husbands, then there is nothing that will affect their toads' hearts. But if anything womanly has remained in them, then they themselves must recoil under the curses which are rained on the heads of those who rocked their cradle or fondled these criminals in their beds.

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BRITISH ISLES

ENGLAND

VERNON WATKINS:

The Collier

When I was born on Amman hill
A dark bird crossed the sun,
Sharp on the floor the shadow fell;
I was the youngest son.

And when I went to the County School
I worked in a shaft of light.
In the wood of the desk I cut my name:
Dai for Dynamite.

The tall black hills my brothers stood;
Their lessons all were done.
From the door of the school when I ran out
They frowned to watch me run.

The slow grey bells they rung a chime
Surly with grief or age.
Clever or clumsy, lad or lout,
All would look for a wage.

I learnt the valley flowers' names
And the rough bark knew my knees.
I brought home trout from the river
And spotted eggs from the trees.

A coloured coat I was given to wear
Where the lights of the rough land shone.
Still jealous of my favour
The tall black hills looked on.

They dipped my coat in the blood of a kid
And they cast me down a pit,
And although I crossed with strangers
There was no way up from it.

Soon as I went from the County School
I worked in a shaft. Said Jim,
"You will get your chain of gold, my lad,
But not for a likely time."

And one said, "Jack was not raised up
When the wind blew out the light
Though he interpreted their dreams
And guessed their fears by night."

And Tom, he shivered his leper's lamp
For the stain that round him grew;
And I heard mouths pray in the after-damp
When the picks would not break through.

They changed words there in darkness
And still through my head they run,
And white on my limbs is the linen sheet
And gold on my neck the sun.

And let loose the drastic season to drown
Delight in pools of cold winter rain.

Now beagle winds from Iceland mourn through
The wailing trees, hunting the sun's green idols
And strip the camouflage, the paper world
Down to its comic bones. No sun
Warms, striping a world gone to ground.

Who fixed a waking moment of the world;
Who has harboured the sun and nursed it in
His bones; who has run mad with winds
In March; who ekes out summer to a single leaf
Time clips his store like the green kingdom.
But he winters and carries the green-fingered man
That paints the white world in the shooting spring
And coaches the squab birds to fly and sing.

GLYN JONES:

Esyllt

As he climbs down our hill, my kestrel rises,
Steering in silence up from five empty fields,
A smooth sun brushed brown across his shoulders,
Floating in wide circles, his warm wings stiff.
Their shadows cut; in new soft orange hunting boots
My lover crashes through the snapping bracken.

The still gorse-hissing hill burns, brags gold broom's
Outcropping quartz; each touched bush spills dew.
Strangely last moment's parting was never sad,
But unreal like my promised years, less felt
Than this intense white silver snail calligraphy
Scrawled here in the sun across these stones.

Why have I often wanted to cry out
More against his going when he has left my flesh
Only for the night? When he has gone out
Hot from my mother's kitchen, and my combs
Were on the table under the lamp, and the wind
Was banging the doors of the shed in the yard.

CORNWALL

DORIAN COOKE:

The Sibyl

It is a castle of shingles where her mantle disasters
The rift and vault of a vagabond sun. There, like a rotting
Crocodile, picked framework sullen as a scar, her violin
Denudes its waste of shrapnel-whips. This world of her life
swings hard.

Now, as the curdled lashes crumble, she throws a great water
Into marble fathoms and soaks the singing drops. Thus her
spoon,
Shunting roundways, cracks the cynic swivel. She grapples the
range
Of the card-pond's ripple to shuffle an ace-headed moon.

Her works, smoking riddles, thawed wax and wig in the taper's
coffin

WALES

JOHN PRICHARD:

Poem

This brown vandal month breaks up the soft
And shifting weather; cracks the smile of the year;

Near that sick fire of thieves where tears spun round spattered
green with salt.

This was her grief telling its fury in the cannibal glass:
She sees the sky on Heathen Hill and the splashing of visions:—

A stuffed opium rag, a loop of eggshells stumbling green sticks,
Ladders of exiles robed with ruin's neck down the chained out-
line

To the swollen girdle, a pole of felons cut length and width
Like a flogged tide-urchin under a beaten rib: these fog-dreams,

Crashing the hot plunged bolt in shank and slip of the brain-
stagger,

Sink a stab of burdens through this winter-woman. She, cor-
nered

In her gnawed face, fumbles like a clapped-out crater, and
croaks

Cold cinders. Her mantle burns; the bright patterns dance in
the blaze.

Darkness was the spun hand of trees felling her past as the
pyre

Tossed the torn ash into a change of flesh,—ash to blood and
bone,

To a crust of horrible skin and sailing heart, to a web
Of choking rust. And resurrection in the garden whirled.

SCOTLAND

NORMAN McCAIG:

Poem

I've brackens' fins for you and beautiful Scotch dances
so love with me and let me live. Under the plate
you'll find a dollar nightmare dressed in silk flounces,
inside the cup a holiday snail eating weeds,
half-down your throat a syren twirling skirts
of sky's blue and sea's green. There are always toads

to juggle moonlight somewhere in the garden,
the horny widows of dead wars to skip for you
on sulphur mountains and lakes of asphalt. I'm the warden
of rocking edens. I crawl about on apples
crying Love with me and I will tumble my grey
visions to leapfrog on the glittering table.

HUGH MACDIARMID:

A Herd of Does

There is no doe in all the herd
Whose heart is not her heart.
O Earth, with all their glimmering eyes
She sees thee as thou art.

Like them in shapes of fleeting fire
She mingles with the light
Till whoso saw her sees her not
And doubts his former sight.

They come and go and none can say
Who sees them subtly run
If they indeed are forms of life
Or figments of the sun.

So is she one with Heaven here,
Confounding mortal eyes,
As do the holy dead who move
Innumerable in the skies.

But now and then a wandering man
May glimpse as on he goes
A golden movement of her dreams
As 'twere a herd of does.

RUTHVEN TODD:

Time Was My Friend

I had made Time my hero and my god,
Summer was not complete without his presence,
Slyly fingering the six-guns that dangled at his side,
The badman of the plains, the man whom posters
Advertised on every stump and broken fence,
I, sick of the intolerance of my masters,
Had made him sheriff in my idle dreams.

He it was who at that final moment
Flicked out his guns and shot away the rope
That tightened on my neck with obvious intent.
In trouble he was always with me, his bright eyes,
His straight sharp nose and his scar-twisted lip
Gave me the courage to spoil the neat surprise
My enemy, the black parson, had planned for me.

My god, my servant was, there at my back
On his grey horse that had outrun the wind
With him to cheer me on I always won my trick
For, no matter if my call was bad, I found the ace
I wanted, sprouting in my expectant hand;
At cards no man could see beyond his face.
Time was my hero and I trusted him.

Time was my friend. It served me right
I never should have given him promotion.
He took advantage and just the other night
He stole the armour I kept against his boisterous jokes,
And when I protested, he with a careless motion,
As swift and subtle as his own black snakes,
Drew both his guns and shot away my legs.

CRIEFF WILLIAMSON:

Poem

Lead us not the only way known
Back into the serious shadow
Light lips moist and expectant
A twist curled and foreshortened.
From silken shapes unbend our limbs,
The nugatory values of light love
The blatant steps of obedience
Disarmed at our swoopings for the flesh
Torn and false and distrusted.
We do not remedy these glowing loves,
Impure through lack of love,
But stumble to the grazing fields
And wait in supplication for our needs,
Blessing and curse alike in these moments
A gross lip movement of despair.
These are the scavenger birds of lust,
Ungainly humps of demonic feather,
Distasteful image of flying bones;
Our hunger is their nourishment,
Our hearts, the reflection of their gestures.

IRELAND

DENIS DEVLIN:

From Government Buildings

Evening lapses. No pity or pain, the badgered
Great get home, & the little, to-morrow's anchorage,
All smiling, sour the milk of charity,
Like the phyrronist poets, love's saboteurs.

The clerks fan out & the lamps; and I look inwards:
What turns amuse you now? with whom (not me) do
You cower in Time, whose palsied pulse is nimbler
A hair's breadth when want & have are equal.

My room sighs empty with malignant waiting;
The November wind slows down outside, wheeling
Twig & awning on the brick balcony,
A wind with hackles up. In Rome at evening

Starlings traced eggshapes on the vellum sky,
The wind was warm with blue rain in Dublin;
When the culture-heroes explored the nether world
It was voiceless beasts on the move made death terrible.

Friendship I will not, barring you; to have witness does:
Doll birds, dogs with their social nose, by day
Are touchstone. But at night my totem silence
With face of wood refuses to testify.

The famous exile's dead, from many on many
Deportations, from Spain to Prague to Nice,
Kaleidoscopic police, his Danse Macabre;
One of the best the worst had never feared.

You, you I cherish with my learned heart
As in the bombed cathedral town, doubly
A tourist trophy now, the dean shouted: "At last
At least & at last we have stored the windows away,

The fabulation of my Lord's glory, by
Seven & by seven & by seven multiplied!"
So is my care though none your mystic I
Nor you like the painted saints but breath & more.

And do not pace the room haunting the future
But be my insular love; and I would have you
Fingering the ring with its silver bat, the foreign
And credible Chinese symbol of happiness.

DENIS DEVLIN:

Mixed Drinks

Stand straight up, box of matches.

In the fungus of drunken breathing
Mist feels at the mirrors
Like doubt turning to anger
In the judge's face.

Blond cylinders weave,
The highstepping waitress ripples over our heads.
I am alone but the others are with me,
Tasting the same food, drink & sleep,
After the day of ambush
When anguish made the soul efficient

With bell, book & candle,
When the lie startled like stoats into hiding
In the eyes of butcher, baker & banker,
When death put up a showy magazine front
For officer & ranker;

It is a kind of dream-desecration
Of the most beautiful forms man has imagined:
Yet you feel less stained than when you see
The uncompetitive horror
In the eyes of a dying man
A little before death.

A shabby-nosed old drunk
Limns with one loyal, black-gloved hand
The motions of a baton, orchestrating
Out of the oxen heart
The world, the flesh & the devil,
The dare of the trumpets, ivied procreation of theme,
Violin-shell children.

DONAGH MAC DONAGH:

They Gave Him A Gun

They gave him a gun,
A trigger to pull that any peasant finger
Could have pulled as well, a barrel to keep sweet

That any eye from Valencia to Madrid
Could have looked through.
His body stopped a bullet and little else,
Stopped no tank or French 75
From crunching over roads of human bones . . .
His brain might have done that
But it has melted into Spanish soil;

But speaks into my brain in parody
Of the voice that was its servant,
And speaks only what it spoke before.
The intricate cells, the labyrinthine ways,
The multicoloured images that lurked and shone,
The dreams betrayed into expression
Melted into a red earth, richer for olive crop.

And through the pleasant European landscapes
The legions march; theodolite and map
Plan out the tactical approach, the gun emplacement,
The unencumbered field for cemetery.

SPAIN

FEDERICO GARCÍA LORCA:

Casida VIII

Of The Golden Girl

The golden girl
was bathing in the water
when the water grew golden.

The algae and the branches
in shadow made her shudder,
and the nightingale sang
for the white girl.

Night came bright,
muddied with bad silver,
with bald mountains
under the brown breeze.

The drenched girl
was white in water,
and the water, all ablaze.

Dawn came spotless
with a thousand cow faces,
stiff and shrouded
with frozen garlands.

Amid flames, the girl
bathed herself in tears,
and the nightingale wept
with burning wings.

The golden girl
was a white heron,
and the water turned her golden.

—Translated by Edwin Honig.

Dialogue of Amargo:

A Field

A Voice: Amargo.

The rosebays of my garden.
Heart of bitter almond.

Amargo.

(Enter: Three young men in wide-brimmed hats.)

1st Young M.: We're going to be late.
 2nd Young M.: Night has overtaken us.
 1st Young M.: What about him?
 2nd Young M.: He's lagging behind.
 1st Young M.: (loudly) Amargo!
 Amargo: I'm coming. (far off)
 2nd Young M.: (yelling) Amargo!!
 Amargo: Coming! (Calmly)

(a pause)

1st Young M.: What beautiful olive orchards!
 2nd Young M.: Yes.

(a long silence)

1st Young M.: I don't like to walk at night.
 2nd Young M.: Nor do I.
 1st Young M.: Night was made for sleeping.
 2nd Young M.: Yes.

(Frogs and crickets sing in the arbors of the Andalusian summer. Amargo walks with hands on his hips.)

Amargo: Ayay. Ayayay.
 I asked for death . . .
 Ayay. Ayayay.

(The cry in his song puts a circumflex accent over the hearts of those who have heard it.)

1st Young M.: (from very far) Amargo!
 2nd Young M.: (almost lost) Amargooo!!

(silence)

(Amargo is alone in the middle of the road. He half-closes his large green eyes and wraps his cloth jacket around his waist. High mountains surround him. His large silver watch ticks obscurely in his pocket at each step.)

(a Rider comes galloping down the road)

Rider: (stopping his horse) Good evening!

Amargo: A peaceful good evening.

Rider: Going to Granada?

Amargo: To Granada.

Rider: Then let's go together.

Amargo: Very well.

Rider: Why not get on behind me?

Amargo: Because my feet aren't tired.

Rider: I'm coming from Malaga.

Amargo: Good.

Rider: My brothers are there.

Amargo: (peevishly) How many of them?

Rider: Three. They sell knives. That's their business.

Amargo: May they be well.

Rider: Silver and gold.

Amargo: A knife shouldn't be more than a knife.

Rider: You're mistaken.

Amargo: Thank you.

Rider: Golden knives are intended only for the heart.

Silver knives cut the neck like a leaf of grass.

Amargo: Aren't they used to cut bread?

Rider: Men break bread with their hands.

Amargo: That's true!

(Horse grows impatient)

Rider: Horse!

Amargo: It is night.

(The waving road cavorts with the animal's shadow.)

Rider: Do you want a knife?

Amargo: No.

Rider: But look here. I give it to you as a gift.

Amargo: But I don't accept.

Rider: You won't have another chance.

Amargo: Who knows?

Rider: Other knives are useless. Other knives are soft and afraid of blood. The ones we sell are cold. Do you understand? They penetrate in search of the warmest spot and stop there.

(Amargo grows silent. His right hand freezes up as though he had grasped a piece of gold.)

Rider: What a beautiful knife!

Amargo: Is it worth much?

Rider: Don't you want this one?

(He takes out a golden knife. Its point shines like a candle flame.)

Amargo: I've said no.

Rider: Boy! Mount with me!

Amargo: I'm still not tired!

(The horse grows wild.)

Rider: (pulling the reins) Such a horse!

Amargo: It's dark. (pause)

Rider: As I was telling you, my brothers in Malaga. What a real knack they have for selling knives. In the

cathedral, two thousand knives are bought to adorn all the altars and to crown the tower. Many ships etch out their names with them; the humblest fishermen on the seashore light the way by the brilliance thrown off by their sharpened blades.

Amargo: How beautiful!

Rider: Who can deny it?

(The night thickens like a hundred-year old wine. The thick serpent of the South opens its eyes on the dawn and in those asleep there is an infinite desire to cast themselves over the balcony into the perverse magic of perfume and distance.)

Amargo: I feel we've lost our way.

Rider: (stopping the horse) Yes?

Amargo: Because of our talk.

Rider: Aren't those the lights of Granada?

Amargo: I don't know.

Rider: The world is very large.

Amargo: Just as it is deserted.

Rider: So you say.

Amargo: It fills me with despair. Ay ayayayay!

Rider: Why have you come here? What are you doing?

Amargo: What am I doing?

Rider: And if you are in the right place, why do you want to be there?

Amargo: Why?

Rider: I ride this horse and sell knives, but if I did not what would happen?

Amargo: What would happen? (pause)

Rider: We are coming to Granada.

Amargo: Is it possible?

Rider: See how the windows glisten.

Amargo: Yes, of course.

Rider: Now you can't refuse mounting with me.

Amargo: Wait a little.

Rider: Come, up! Up, quickly. We must arrive before dawn . . . And take this knife—a gift from me.

Amargo: Ay ayayayay!

(The Rider helps Amargo up. The two follow the road to Granada. The hills in the background are covered with hemlock and nettles.)

* * * *

Song of Amargo's Mother

They are carrying him wrapped in my sheet,
 my rosebays and my palm tree.

The twenty-sixth day of August,
 with a small golden knife.

The Cross. And what is more,
 he was pale and bitter.

I want some lemonade, neighbors,
 lemonade in a brass jar.

The Cross. Weep for him, no one.
 Amargo is in the moon.

—Translated by Edwin Honig.

BELGIUM

ALAIN BOSQUET:

Ode To The Country Out of Reach

To Jules Supervielle

Over the plains of the simoom,
 Over the animal breaths,
 I move ahead,
 Always like smoke.
 Always like the twisted vertebrae
 Of my young sadness.
 I am nothing but a cinder
 In a dismal traveller's eye,
 I am nothing but the lurch

Of a carriage coming back
 From the town with fourteen minarets
 To the town with the single tomb.
 I am the stupor of this horse
 As my hand grips his mane.
 I am the subsiding maple,
 Killed by the sure blows of apples.
 I am flight,
 And night fermenting
 Like a pod of wild irises,
 I am all that is not yet
 Become irrevocable:
 Sap, resin, fin
 Or future tear.
 I am only a man with a syllable,
 Flesh too heavy for remorse,
 Bones too long for timid marrow.
 My skull cracks at each of my bites;
 My eyelids turn into seashells
 At the false moves of my melancholy.
 Too much snow goes through me;
 Too much corn has grown on my cheeks;
 Too much azure has got into my warm blood.
 My face is here,
 Turned what way on my shoulder?
 My hair is here,
 Blowing what side of my exile?
 And my palm, one day so gentle, so clement,
 My palm is here, quartered
 Like a dead frog on my breast.
 I am not yet one with my skeleton;
 I have not yet entered into my soul;
 I do not yet own all my shadow,
 Which is like the last coach,
 Always behind time,
 Of an infected train.
 Yes but my own train
 It does not go to the end of the world;
 But my own ship,
 It never goes down the pitching roads.
 For I have taken all the boats of fantasy:
 Those that climb to the sky,
 Those that drop by drop climb up the rain,
 Those that become violet ice-packs
 At the first fish met;
 I have taken the submarine,
 The joyous frigate,
 The dove-escorted caravel,
 The orange-skin canoe;
 I have taken all the rafts
 That crowd the straits of pregnant peninsulas
 And never! never have I got further
 Than the outer roads of myself,
 Than the view of my resigned exodus.

* * *

Of what lack-love was I born,
 Of what perdition of the flesh,
 Of what sniggering nomads.
 Of what ill-finished miscarriage?
 I had my childhood
 Among flying jousts;
 I had my tenderness
 In stars painted on the walls;
 I had my grievous dreams,
 My tatoos in the working-class quarter,
 My toys resembling
 Great-uncles with chattering teeth.
 Always ridiculous puppets
 And never evil-doers!
 Always brown castle-keeps,
 Always gargoyles crying,
 And never castles full of warmth!
 Always magical names:
 Carmentine, Flamineuse, Viloree,
 And never a hip to grip!
 More sections of capital cities.
 And not a single hamlet whole!
 More river mouths.
 And not a single glass of water!
 More soft worlds,
 More poison-carrying moons,
 And not a single forget-me-not!
 And not a single perfume
 I can really breathe in!
 More words,
 More allegorical breasts,

And not a single poem
 That I write out to the end!
 I have lived in all the lairs of contempt,
 From the forehead of the canack gods
 To the dolhmens that change into violincellos,
 I have known the pardon of the groundswell
 And the disdain, like an old puma,
 Of the sordid jungle;
 I have known the aquatic branches of the lightning;
 I have known the faded street-lamps
 At the corner of tubercular streets;
 I have known the sapphires that provoke
 Running to see and mewing;
 I have known countrysides
 That had not yet the aspect of torture,
 Only in the end,
 After all my false attempts at purity,
 To perceive nothing but a deserted city,
 A blind acropolis,
 A burnt out port,
 A destination adrift.
 Ten images while you wink your eye,
 And where is the poem?
 So much juicy clay in my arms,
 And where is the statue?
 So many rich colours,
 And where is the water-colour?
 So many repetitions of myself
 In how many mirrors
 And where is my true form, and where is my true body?

* * *

And yet I have loved well
 With all the strength of my incoherence.
 I loved a woman
 She is in the land of skyscrapers
 And hanging boulevards,
 While I am buried in the burning sands,
 In the penitential bracken.
 I loved a woman,
 And she is nothing any longer but vitriol flesh,
 But the belly of a half-breed,
 But the arm of a drowned, salted female,
 But the too soft skin
 Of an adder with eyes like a European girl's.
 I have loved an ancient people
 For its mode of cruelty,
 Raising the gallows,
 Conducting caravans of chivalry,
 Look at me now, become a sulking Redskin
 Smoking dried iguana brains,
 Where now is my ancient people?
 Where now my gleaming sabre-blow?
 Where now is the hanged man that spits
 From the cathedral spires?
 Where now the soldier that decapitates volcanoes?
 Where now is the vagrant condemned to outlive himself
 In heavy panoply I have loved my planet with all its caprices:
 The quenched mountains,
 The oases like cold lips,
 The earthquakes resembling terrible ideas
 And all the stars
 One uses, whirling them around
 To calm one's loneliness a little.
 But alas! I remain on an earth
 Whose weakness is too much self-questioning,
 The earth of doubt, the mildewed earth;
 Her meridians are twisted
 Like sclerosis veins;
 Why her equator
 Like a worm-eaten hoop?
 Why her islands like alligator's pranks?
 Why her birds almost bald
 From pecking at vertiginous heights?
 Why her sky dissolving
 Into a packet of old feathers?
 I have loved poetry,
 Slowly, with its discord
 And its daily distrust,
 With its surprises and its musical-boxes,
 And in some serene moments have loved
 Its fantastic beings,
 Its peacock-tailed centaurs,
 Its statues that sing
 Like lost nebulae.
 Well then: I am in the epoch of silence;
 Words are widowed,

Like hairy obelisks;
The trumpets break
Against empty palaces;
It is the time for gravity
Like the sea, like mountain-flax,
Like wine,
Like a vulture that hesitates
Between a flock of white gazelles
And a flock of black gazelles.

* * *

Another train to take me away!
Another ship to bear me off!
Even if the train were to crash!
Even if it were the ship destined
To lead me definitively to my drowning!
But no, it is a fresh setting forth!
But no, it is a new exodus!
Good-bye, I am leaving my own self,
I will complete my break-away;
Good-bye to my difficult body!
Good-bye to my light soul!
I am prepared to climb Impromptu Mountain,
I am prepared to drink the polluted ocean.
Good-bye, the road's before me,
It forks in my sorrow,
It grows in my revolt.
Good-bye,
My house is a Solitary Symphony;
Good-bye, my capital is built
Above the humiliated perfumes;
Good-bye, the sanctuaries are choking;
Good-bye, my only signposts
Are heaps of bones turning round;
Good-bye, I am on the quest
Of a laughter more precious than the thirst of my blood;
Good-bye, here is the first drop of the deluge,
Good-bye, here is my end of the world:
It is the contour of my knee:
Good-bye, here is my dream greedy as a grasshopper;
Good-bye, this train is going to the depths,
This ship is bound
For the life of the air.
It is the last stop,
The last friendly fruit,
The ultimate kiss.
Good-bye,
I am making a poor job
Of collecting the astonished debris of my poem;
Good-bye, I don't yet know how to collect
The pebbles and the thorns of my malediction;
I know not yet
Either high suffering,
Or fierce love,
Or even, amid my lying images,
The simplest,
The most tranquil maturity.

—Translated by Denis Devlin.

FRANCE

ANDRÉ SPIRE:

Disembodied

You say to me
I do not want to see your troubled eyes.

Are you then nothing but a soul?
Nothing but a soul?
The soul of your closed eyes?

A soul?

The water flows without wrinkles.
All is flowing, pale, bloodless.
Nothing but the transparent shadows of curves,
Of meanderings!
No fits and starts,

No jostling!
But all tying, untying,
Plains, lagunes, twilights,
Clouds, constellations, worlds,
Systems without substance.

Oh! leave your warm couch
Where, light, weightless,
You listen vaguely
To these blind games!

Stand up!

How vivacious you are before the mirror
Your hair in battle array
Rearing at the comb!
The pins pop,
Your nervous fingers forage.
Look! your flaming eyes,
The veins of your young neck swelling!

Nothing is easy here!
Nothing gets done of itself!
The pink of your cheeks,
The red of your lips
It all poses, takes shape,
And the powder, flying over your breast,
You need a brush and your hands to chase it off.

Come and go, trinketing and traipsing,
Line up the chairs, arrange the arm-chairs,
Plunder the drawers, fuss up the stuffs,
Water your flower-pots, arrange your flowers,
Till you let the vases slip sometimes
And nervous, furious, laughing,
Why don't you tell your soul that loves them
To gather up the bits on all fours!

Are you still afraid of my troubled eyes?

—Translated by Denis Devlin.

PIERRE EMMANUEL:

Concentration Camps

Down in the steep pit sealed by sunlight
A little quivering mud and silence.
The whole man is dying here. Will
His tortured form reveal the secret that angels
Tremble with? the boldness of standing in the face
Of God, the daring of a suffering that provokes
The unimaginable accents God alone
Hears surging from the ages' depths to chill
The absurd hierarchies of His glory?

And you, anonymous hangman, whose function
Is to disfigure your own face,
Worn out by hate and sorrow, will you reach
Those shores of pure inhumanity where the Face of God
Is quite close and is so hurt with love,
Behind the victims' translucent faces,
That the most hellish blasphemy would be less
Sacrilegious than that face in filigree,
Yours! Who will confront you in eternity?

If (victim or hangman, what matter!) one heart should dare
Assume the guilt of all blood for love's sake,
If horror tore the sky and crime
Were God in a flash of infinite memory:
A prayer might then be raised, hands
Sing out a Tree upon the calcined shades,
A look could quench the love-thirst of the wounds,
A meaning flower out of the thorn and the lip, an essence
Unite crime and candour in a single cry
And God remembers himself in the triumphal pangs
Of the flesh, the blessed, the poor flesh.

But God knows not that it is He who dies:
So sweet to Him His suffering in men,
Whose grief confirms Him in His eternity.
Or perhaps He has never been but dead
In this flesh tortured to the very soul,
This flesh that cries Him living, that already
Offers itself for the resurrection of all flesh
In the terrifying joy of His presence.

—Translated by Denis Devlin.

ALSACE

YVAN GOLL:

Landless John Purchases Manhattan

Manhattan Rock: phantom of vertical clay
Whose welcome greets the ship far off the coast
Before your bankers and your longshoremen
I lift my ancient hat a threadbare ghost.

Kissed by the ocean your inhuman Alp
Rises from those in sweat of labor drowned
Alp where the voiceless herds of sorrow graze
Where springs of soda gush from underground.

And on the Hudson the red ferries wander
Like the swift shuttles driven by the weaver
Who twists into his ancient tapestry.
Figures that fade and melt into the river.

But here old age like twilight comes more swiftly
Grass withers and the iron grows brown with stain
More than a hundred stories clothe the void
Solitude calls her sister but in vain.

Name yourself bankrupt: boom years of the twenties
Drive from the Bowery all who are forgotten

Under the innocent giants of the earth
In their green graves the ancestors lie rotten.

The turnstile in the subway grinds the crowd
The paper pulp the pulp of destiny
The crowd that like a flood of tears disperses
And scatters towards the beds of infamy.

And at Times Square the merchants of the storm
Sell the split fifes and drums of death and offer
The candelabra of the festival
Insurance benefits for those who suffer.

Take out a mortgage against human wisdom
Lease the suburban greensward in the Park
The Fates in combine purchase shares of cotton
The Bourse of irony is closed and dark.

If man climbs to the peak of Jacob's ladder
And smiles down from the hundred-second story
He stumbles down the staircase of old age
Towards Job's poor bone-yard far from fame and glory.

Sell death buy the Eumenides
Sell simoom sell liberty
Buy dream sell the Hebrides
Oh sell and buy and sell and sell and buy.

I sell Manhattan for eternity
I purchased all its brilliance for a smile
Some day this white sand will no longer glisten
But fill the slow dream of the granite isle.

—Translated by Clark Mills.

U.S.A.

JAMES T. FARRELL:

Danny O'Neill Gets A Job

Marty Mulligan pumped gas for Nation Oil. It was a good job. Marty had told Danny that if you wanted to land with one of the oil companies, you had to talk big. Tell them how good you were.

What would he say? How should he talk? His mind had gone blank.

Five other applicants sat with him on the benches in the bare anteroom, waiting to be interviewed. He'd already waited about a half hour. But his turn was next.

Suppose he landed a job? How did he know that he could hold it. He had security at the express company. Patsy McLaughlin wouldn't fire one of Jim O'Neill's sons. Here, he might fail, and then where would he be?

He had to think success, not failure. He had to go on.

The white-haired chap opposite him was fidgety. The others were placid. Did they feel as he did? When you looked for a job, you were ashamed. You were nothing, dirt, and you had to come asking for something. If you amounted to anything, you didn't have to go hunting work with your hat in your hand. Well he was somebody, a clerk in the Wagon Call Department, Continental Express Company: somebody who was nobody. If you amounted to anything, you had drag, an old man, friends, uncles, someone to get you in on pull.

He had to think success, not failure. He couldn't go on at the express company. He'd stewed for two weeks before making up his mind to try. But he had tried now. The other oil companies had cold-shouldered him. Nothing doing. He knew that they needed attendants for the spring and summer business. He'd failed. This was his last hope.

Think success, not failure.

"Mr. O'Neill," the office boy called.

Danny rose. Without confidence, he followed the office boy into the presence of Mr. David Gallagher, Supervisor of Service Stations for the Upton Oil and Refining Company.

Mr. Gallagher, a tall, well-built, youthful man, sat at a littered desk, speaking on the telephone.

"What did you say his name was?" Mr. Gallagher asked.

Danny stood waiting. He could feel his heart beating rapidly. How could he even say a word now? All was lost.

Danny tried to size up Mr. Gallagher. He looked like a regular fellow.

"Yes? Well, send him around. We're always looking for a good man," Mr. Gallagher said; then, he hung up.

Mr. Gallagher glanced at Danny. He seemed like an open, frank, decent fellow.

"Well, here I am," Danny said boldly.

Mr. Gallagher popped with surprise.

Danny was astounded by his own words. They had come without any exercise of will. He imagined that he were a third person calmly watching himself.

"Yes, here I am," Danny repeated with self-assurance.

"What do you mean?"

"You just said that you were looking for a good man. Well, here I am."

"That's interesting news. Would you mind sitting down?"

Danny took a chair facing Mr. Gallagher. Now that he'd started talking big, he had to carry through.

"What's your name?"

"O'Neill, Daniel O'Neill."

"What's on your mind, Mr. O'Neill?"

"My ultimate plan is to be a lawyer, a corporation lawyer, working in the Legal Department of the Upton Oil and Refining Company."

"But this is the Service Station Department."
"I know. You see, I want to work my way up. I want to work my way through school."

"If you do that, how can you work for me?"

"I've thought a lot about this, and about my plans." Danny was still amazed by his conduct. He sensed that he was making a good impression, and gained more self-confidence. "While I'm working my way through college, I want to kill two birds with one stone. I want to locate now with the concern that I hope to stick with. Then, while I'm getting my education, I'll also be learning in the business world. I'll be getting practical experience in all phases of the business to which I want to devote my life." Danny paused briefly. "That way, I'll be putting theory and practice together. I'll be using my time advantageously while I'm going to college to get my formal education."

"That makes sense."

"Yes, what I did was to consider the possibilities before me. I asked myself, 'What company would I like to be connected with?' I decided that I wanted to get in the oil business because it is a coming industry. There's a future in it. And, that's why I'm here now, applying for work."

"Are you in school now?"

"I'm registered at the University of Chicago. My credits have been accepted, and I'll be admitted there next fall without having to take any entrance examinations."

"How old are you?"

"Twenty-one."

"You don't look it."

"But I am. I can prove it. I've been out of high school almost two years."

"What have you been doing since you graduated from high school?"

"I've been working in the Wagon Call Department of the Continental Express Company. I'm still working there."

"Why do you want to change jobs?"

"Mr. Gallagher, I don't want to sound presumptuous."

"Go ahead—I'm interested."

"As I said, I don't want to sound presumptuous, but I want to make a future for myself. There's no future in the express company. There is one with the Upton Oil and Refining Company."

"How do you know there isn't?"

"I've worked there now for almost two years. The very way that the company is organized militates against a young man having a future in the express business. The company organization is—it's stratified." He hoped that the word stratified would impress Mr. Gallagher. He had to keep on talking fast now. "Yes, if I may say so, I've thought a great deal about my plans and my problems, about what I want to do. I have confidence in myself. In this day and age, if you want to get anywhere at all, you've got to have confidence in yourself. You've got to believe in yourself."

"That's true," Mr. Gallagher said enigmatically.

Danny feared that he was overshooting his bolt.

"You say that you have a high school education?"

"Yes, and also I've done a half a year's pre-legal work at night school, at Saint Vincent's. My general average for this work at Saint Vincent's is 92. I'm going on with pre-legal work at the University of Chicago."

"Are you still going to night school?"

"I quit."

"Why?"

"At Saint Vincent's, the pre-legal course in night school is not thorough enough. You only have to take one year of pre-legal work. Then you go into law. At the University of Chicago, you have to take three years of pre-legal work before going into the law school. It's longer this way, but then, it's more thorough. I'm willing to take the longer course, if it will enable me to prepare myself more solidly for my career. I want a solid foundation."

Mr. Gallagher leaned forward, riveting an expressionless face on Danny. Danny thought that he had to go on talking.

"And all that I ask is a chance. If you give me the chance, I know that I'll make good."

"How do you know?"

"I know. I have confidence. I think that a man like myself is the kind you want."

"Can you sell oil?"

"Yes, yes Sir."

"Have you ever sold?"

"No, Sir."

"Then how do you know that you can sell?"

"Give me the chance, and I'll prove it."

Mr. Gallagher glanced down at some papers on his desk.

If this man only knew what this job meant. There he was,

calmly fingering papers, and he held a destiny, a future in the palm of his hand. These seconds were endless.

Mr. Gallagher dug into his drawer, pulling out more papers.

"Mr. O'Neill, here's our application form. I'd like you to go home and fill it out. And here's an application from the bonding company. We pay the costs of bonding you—that is, if I decide to employ you."

Danny took the application from Mr. Gallagher. He smiled. Mr. Gallagher returned the smile. Danny liked this man. His confidence mounted. Perhaps he'd really land this job. Now his dreams of the University might not at all be idle and impossible.

"I'm glad to have met you, Mr. O'Neill," Mr. Gallagher said cursorily.

He rose and shook Danny's hand firmly. Then he pushed a button. An office boy appeared.

"Send in the next man," Mr. Gallagher said, sitting down.

"Goodbye," Danny said, now wanting to get out of the office, lest he reveal his anxiety.

"So long, O'Neill."

WILLIAM MARCH:

The Escaped Elephant

After several years of performing with a traveling circus, an elephant escaped and returned to her native jungle. Her old friends remembered her at once, and as she waded into the river and took her place beside them, they began to question her about herself and to ask her what her life had been like in the years of her absence. But the wanderer shook her ears, sighed and sank down in water up to her haunches.

Seeing this, an old bull elephant spoke gently: "I suppose the things you've been through are too terrible to talk about, daughter. I suppose your captors starved you and made you do work so far beyond your strength that you often fainted from exhaustion."

"Why, no," said the elephant in surprise. "It wasn't at all like that. As a matter of fact, they gave me better food than anything I ever got for myself in the jungle, and the only work I did was to walk in the parade twice a week, balance myself on a big wooden ball and pound on a drum in front of the main tent." She lay back in the mud and rolled on her side, grunting with pleasure at being home again.

"They beat you, didn't they?" asked a young cow, adding in explanation, "Everybody knows how cruel men can be."

"They weren't cruel to me," said the escaped elephant. "Oh, no, that didn't happen at all. On the contrary, they were very considerate, especially a man named Tommy who took care of me." She turned on her other side, splashing the warm, muddy water, and went on dreamily: "I'll never forget poor little Tommy. He was so sweet and so silly. Tommy used to tie a pink bow on my tail when we were alone. One time he painted my toenails red and whitened my trunk with chalk, threatening to walk me in the parade that way. We laughed that time until our sides ached."

By this time the whole herd was staring at its returned sister in amazement. Then the old male spoke cautiously: "If you were fed so well and treated so well, why did you leave such an ideal existence for the hard, uncertain life we lead here in the jungle?"

The runaway elephant straightened her front legs and rose upward a little in the water. "I think it was because they made so much noise all the time," she said. "They were always playing brass bands and shouting at one another and firing off cannons, and I couldn't stand it any longer. Men are strong enough to stand that din and confusion, but I'm not." She filled her trunk with water and released it slowly over her rough, armor-plated body. "I suppose the truth of the matter is that I'm too thin skinned," she said apologetically.

JACK ROTHSTEIN:

Two Fried Eggs

And so there it lay, face upward so that the whole world could see, and yet he wasn't proud of it. It had come in the morning's mail. The bell had rung while he was eating. Slowly, he walked to the door. He had expected it, but not this soon. He took the extended letter from the mailman and returned to his breakfast. But he didn't feel like eating anymore. He looked at the letter: "Return to sender within 5 days" was printed in the upper left hand corner. And underneath was the address

of his local draft board. He looked at the eggs lying in front of him. Somehow, they didn't look the same. Their golden-yellow seemed to have faded, to have turned into a drab orange color. He reached for his toast. It, too, did not look the same. It no longer looked the crisp-brown of before. He pushed it from him and turned to the letter again.

The date mark fascinated him. It was stamped Feb. 12, 6 P.M., 1943. That was three days ago. Think of it, three days ago, at 6 o'clock, he had lost his freedom. He was now no longer a civilian. His time and habits were now no longer his own. He now belonged to Uncle Sam, to the army. He ripped open the letter. There it was: "You will report for induction on February 15, 1943 at your local armory." He read it again. Yes, February 15 it stated. That was today. He reached for his coffee. It had been steaming when he first sat down. He put the cup to his lips. Disgusted, he replaced the cup on its saucer and got up.

He went to the closet and put on his hat and coat. No longer would he be wearing a soft, grey overcoat or a light-weight grey fedora. He looked at his shoes. No, no more Cuban heel, Morocco grain shoes for him either. He reached for the letter on his way out and put it in his coat pocket as the door closed softly behind him. As he put the letter in his pocket, his hand encountered a stiff piece of cardboard. He pulled it out. It was a theatre stub. He looked at the stub and remembered that next week another play was to be given. This time by the Vagabond players. And they were importing a very talented actress from New York to play the lead.

He started down the street in the general direction of the armory. As he crossed the street, he saw something glitter in the gutter. He stooped and picked it up. It was a key. The key was a large one and was made of brass. It had three teeth protruding from its side. It was an odd-looking key, just like the one that fitted his closet door. And then he remembered the skis that lay in there. He had cleaned and waxed them just before putting them away. He also remembered the fine time he had had with them last year, skiing up and down the countryside while visiting his grandfather's farm. He could still picture his grandfather and grandmother standing at the doorway as he left for home, and he could still hear them shouting goodbye and reminding him to be sure and come again next year. He visited them only once a year. That was in February, last February, and here it was February again. He quickened his pace, and the letter rustled in his pocket.

And now he was in the armory. There were about a hundred fellows there before him. He got in line.

He was home now. He had failed to pass the army physical. They said he had running ears. He knew he had running ears, but he didn't think that would keep him out of the draft. But it had. And now, he was free again. He was a civilian again. His time and his habits were his own once more. He could still wear his soft, grey overcoat, and he could still wear his grey, light-weight fedora, and his Cuban-heel, Morocco grain shoes. He could now see the play next week, and he could now go to visit his grandfolds. And his skis were his to use again whenever he wanted. He hurried into the kitchen and boiled himself some eggs, and made some toast and some coffee. He was hungry. He had been at the armory almost all of the day, and all he had had to eat was two dried out sandwiches, an orange, and some hot cocoa.

He was whistling as he sat down to eat. Hungrily, he looked at the two glistening eggs before him. Somehow, they didn't look as golden as they should look. He reached for the toast. It, too, was not as crisp as usual. Even the coffee did not smell the same. He stopped whistling.

WELDON KEES:

Every Year They Came Out

They had not been able to get the room at the hotel that they liked, the one they always had. The room they preferred to all the others was on the fourth floor, facing the park and the boulevard. It had a little balcony on which they could sun themselves on good mornings.

It was because of Miss Cora's negligence that they had to take, instead, a dark, unpleasant room at the back. It offered nothing in the way of a view. Before they had left Nebraska, Miss Ernestine instructed Miss Cora, since Miss Ernestine was the senior sister as well as the dominant one, to write for reservations. "Write them that we want our old room, 417, the same as always," she told her early in September. Later, having some

doubt in her mind about her sister's capability, Miss Ernestine asked Miss Cora if she had carried out her instructions, and Miss Cora said, "Yes, Ernestine, I'm quite positive that I wrote them." "Quite positive!" said Miss Ernestine. "Did you write to them or didn't you?" "I think I did," Miss Cora had said.

It was an unconvincing reply, and Miss Ernestine had remarked rather acidly that it was scarcely enough for her to think that she had written. What she wanted to know was: *Had* she or had she not? Well, Miss Cora had said, she was almost positive. Yes, she remembered now. She remembered sitting down one morning and writing a letter to the hotel people. Yes, it all came back to her now. She was very definite about it.

But, as it turned out, the manager of the hotel had received no word at all from them. They had arrived in Los Angeles by train on the eighteenth of October, tired out from the long journey and from the berths in which neither of them had slept well, and irritable because they had not had their daily baths, only to find out, after a frightened ride with a surly and careless taxi-driver who they felt sure was bent on destroying them both, that Miss Cora had not written after all. She had not written, and there were only two rooms left.

For days Miss Ernestine had given Miss Cora no peace. Suddenly, in the middle of a sentence about something totally unrelated to their room, she would break off to say, "Cora, why in Heaven's name didn't you *tell* me you hadn't written? Certainly you should have had that much sense."

"Ernestine, please. I'm so awfully sorry. Why don't we go to another hotel?"

"I don't want to go to another hotel."

"But you're so upset. And we always come here."

"I am *not* upset. Honestly, it's getting so I can't depend upon you to do the simplest things right."

"Ernestine, if you don't like this room, why don't we pick up and go someplace else? There are lots of other hotels. I've told you I don't know how many times how sorry I am about not writing for reservations. It happened, and we can't do anything about it now."

"It's all very well to be sorry," said Miss Ernestine grimly. "But that does not alter the fact that we are in this abominable little room."

"Please, Ernestine, let's move to another hotel."

"I am certainly not going to. We've been staying in this hotel for ten years. I'm used to it here. I am certainly not going to go to all that trouble."

It was actually their eighth winter in the hotel. The hotel had been recommended to them originally by Mrs. Griffin, a friend of their mother. Mrs. Griffin was a Christian Scientist who had spent her last years in Los Angeles, in order to be close to the heart of Christian Science. She had lived there until she had died, or whatever it is that Christian Scientists do when they no longer give the appearance of having life. Mrs. Griffin had almost converted Mrs. Cuthrell, the mother of Miss Cora and Miss Ernestine, to this faith, but the daughters had remained Episcopalians. One reason they had for liking the hotel was its close proximity to their favorite Episcopal church in Los Angeles.

Every winter Miss Ernestine and Miss Cora came out to Los Angeles, sometimes in October and sometimes in November. They would stay until Spring. Then they would return to Nebraska. They were both extremely cold-blooded and liked to get back to Nebraska for the hot weather. They liked the scorching summer heat. It made them feel alive.

It was a curious phenomenon that neither of the Cuthrell sisters perspired. On the hottest days, when there were numerous deaths from heat-prostration and all who found it possible were inside their houses with all the windows closed and the curtains pulled down and electric fans blowing on cakes of ice, the Cuthrell sisters would think nothing at all of working in their flower garden under the blistering sun. They would work together in the heat, Ernestine nervously, giving directions, and Cora slowly and painstakingly. They would not perspire.

Behind the Cuthrell sisters was money, and behind them, too, importantly, were their ancestors. Their father had been a judge on the bench of the State Supreme Court. In their home in Nebraska, above the mantelpiece, across from the head that had once belonged to a deer the judge had shot, was an oil painting of the judge in his black robes. He wore a cold, stern expression. He had enjoyed wearing this expression while posing for the portrait. It was a good likeness. The Cuthrell sisters admired but secretly feared the painting of their father, for his expression in it was the same one he had affected when reprimanding the members of his family. He used the same expression, too, when handing down a decision from the bench. It was the way Miss Ernestine and Miss Cora remembered him. Although he had enjoyed wearing this expression while posing for the picture, he had not had the opportunity of enjoying it for

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The Adventurer

He came from a small town in northern Michigan, up around the head of the lakes. His father, I learned later, was a doctor, a man well respected in the community in which they lived. The parent had, according to his son, an intense desire to pull up stakes and strike out across the sea to Europe, to travel. But one thing or another always turned up: children were being born, one side of the house fell in and had to be repaired, he was elected two years running as county sanitary commissioner, and so on. "My father always wanted to break away, to travel," his son explained to me. "He was restless. He should have been born six or seven centuries ago, when there were crusades, adventures . . ."

In the end the doctor, I believe, subscribed to a life-time membership of the National Geographic Society. He worked himself out, tending to his patients, and, while still middle-aged, died of pneumonia, leaving three daughters and one son, besides his wife, behind. However, he must have had a practical streak somewhere, for when the will was probated it was discovered he had invested heavily in some sound copper mining stock. In fact, it developed he had left quite a nest-egg. Mrs. Gilson, his wife, was certainly surprised; she had always been pestering him to give up his day-dreams and be "practical" for a change.

When the estate was set in order Mrs. Gilson decided to move her family to Chicago. Her daughters were growing up and her son, Milt, had already started chafing. Besides, she had grown a bit tired of the little Michigan town. During the berry-picking season the streets were full of drunken Indians and after the spring thaws, when the lumberjacks arrived for excitement, the town was the scene of brawls. Of course, these festivities took place in the poorer quarters, on the other side of the railroad tracks; still, Mrs. Gilson was tired out and felt like moving, and many of her bridge friends felt she was acting wisely. Mrs. Gilson was a nice little pleasant woman in her middle forties, with a warm smile and a gentle nature. Everybody liked her. The day before she moved her family away, the bridge club gave a party in her honor; also, the county paper ran a half-column story about her departure.

I met Milt Gilson during my senior year at high school. At that time his family had been in Chicago only since late summer and he still felt strange. The city was new to him, also his classmates. It was on the very first day of enrollment when I came across him. I was walking through the crowded halls, about to report to my section, and greeting fellows and girls I had not seen during the summer, when I saw him. He was standing near the south stair-case, with that defensive frown on his face, looking alone. The students, laughing and talking, were going past him. Everybody was tanned up from the summer vacation. The fellows seemed taller and the girls looked older somehow. It was exciting, bumping into classmates after the long holiday of summer.

Well, I saw him standing there, with that defensive frown on his face. In his hands were some papers and programs he had received from the office. He looked pretty much alone, so I went over to him. "New?" "Why yes—yes, I am," he answered quickly, looking glad that I had come over. "This is my first day here. I'm an out-of-towner. Perhaps you can tell me where room 302 is. I have to report there."

"That's where I go," I told him. "That's my section, too," and, as the first bell was due to ring soon, I told him, pleasantly, to hurry. He followed me as I broke into a half-run, and we reached 302 with the bell. The room was about filled up already, so we took seats in the rear, near the windows. When the class settled down, I appraised him. He looked about seventeen, about a year older than myself, and was a bit over medium height, with a tendency toward leanness. His face, already, had that set look of severity, of decision; it was finely chiselled, resolute, in fact. And though his hair was pitch black and curly, his skin was white, with a heightening of color around the cheek bones and his forehead. His eyes, dark and blazing, were sometimes restless, sometimes steady.

He sat opposite me, listening to what our section teacher, Mrs. Burnett, was saying. Mrs. Burnett, a large, big-boned amiable Scotswoman, was giving us the customary address she had given for years to every new class of seniors. She said something to the effect that this being our last year at our alma mater we had an example to set toward the freshmen, sophomores and juniors of the school, and she hoped that the final year of our studies would be pleasant and profitable. Then she volunteered to help us with our programs, calling for questions from the room. Milt sat next to me, listening to her words.

When the bell rang out we went to our classes. Because it was the first day and we were still filled with the vacation feeling of summer, we filed out noisily, talking and scuffling. Mrs. Burnett smiled at us, sitting at her desk. She knew we would tame down a bit, when the grind began to stiffen. She smiled at us pleasantly as we went to our classes.

Milt kept near me as we walked along the corridor. He asked for my program, to see if we had any courses together, but he handed my program back, disappointed, for our subjects were not at all alike. First of all, he was majoring in science and I was majoring in history and mathematics. His steps took him to the chemistry labs while mine led toward a class of advanced math. He parted somewhat awkwardly, blurting "Say, look here, why can't we two be friends? You seem darned decent, you're the only one who even noticed me. I say, why can't we somehow stick together?"

I was somewhat taken aback and almost burst out laughing at his seriousness. Somehow, a sort of instinct or unconscious reasoning made me suspect the intense dramatics of his manner. However, "Why not?" I said easily. "Anyway, we're in the same section."

Well, that's how it started, our friendship, I mean. As I recall now, the strange part of it was that, until he became acclimated to his classes, he fairly followed me around up and down the halls, but soon, gathering confidence from his surroundings, he suddenly became assertive and in some ways began to dominate people. He threw himself into his studies in which he was an able pupil; also, he entered all sorts of school activities and became a sort of stormy petrel. He somehow got himself appointed on the staff of the high school monthly and began to flood the paper with his tempestuous poetry; and his stuff, in the high-flown Henley tradition, caught on and became the rage. Also, he joined the debating society and by his dominant personality forced the group to choose subjects such as: "Resolved that it is better to stake all on a high ideal and, if necessary, lose, than to be merely an honest member of society and not have any high ideal at all." Or: "Who are the greater, statesmen or explorers?" In short, there were no stopovers on his mental journeyings, it was Caesar or nothing, immortality or the flames. He even joined the school opera club, and, though his singing voice was terrible, he managed to snare a juicy part of "The Mikado" and somehow bellowed his way to the loudest applause of the house. Of course, being intense, he made enemies as well as friends, but his talents were so undeniable that his teachers began feeling more proud of him with the passing of each day.

One would have thought Milt Gilson would not have bothered about me, after he had hit his stride, yet he always had time, in the midst of his activities, to be friendly to me. "I tell you, McGuiness," he would say repeatedly, "you ought to get into the swim of things, you know." But I'd answer, smiling, "I like Math and baseball, life is too short to get into every activity in the whole school." Of course he couldn't see this and would argue with me no end. But though his arguments were forceful and convincing he would have to throw up his hands in defeat. "I can't understand you, McGuiness. Don't you want to be a leader and fight your way ahead?" I repeated, still smiling, that at present Math and baseball was my dish. "No, I can't understand it!" he repeated, and dashed away on a run to a debating society which he led.

Still, I was his friend, perhaps the best friend he had at school. At any rate, so he informed me. "You're too steady," he told me. "Still, perhaps it's your type that forms the backbone of our land. With me, it's different, something keeps driving me on. I suppose I'll be an explorer or an adventurer, though Mother wants me to take up dentistry," he said. And then, under a democratic surge of feeling, he'd ask me about my post-graduation plans. I told him that after graduation I'd try and get a job. Again he became impatient, and finally he gave up hope.

However, we continued to be friendly and he had a soft spot in his heart for me. He asked me over to his house on Sundays and I got to know his sisters. They were quite pretty, especially the oldest who was sixteen and brunette. The other two were younger, fourteen and twelve. In return I invited him to my house one Sunday. My folks are rather plain conservative people and we have a large family; and my many brothers and my older sister are more or less average like myself. Consequently, when Milt told my sister to play the piano while he started to bellow—well, it suddenly dawned on my brothers that they had engagements somewhere else. They put on their hats and went down to the corner cigar store in a rush. My father, who at that time worked in a machine shop and was fond of spending Sunday afternoons reading, went into his bedroom for a quiet catnap, closing his door. "The devil, what lungs!" I heard him mutter in his room. All left the house or the parlor except my sister, my mother and myself. My mother

sat near the window sewing, rocking herself faster as Milt's finale burst crashingly against the walls. As for my sister, well, she has a sense of humor, she's a devil in fact. A large, good looking girl, she sat at the piano, playing and enjoying herself. When Milt finally finished she urged him to do an encore. And after two or three numbers, she kept playing new songs until he grew hoarse. Finally, in desperation, the family upstairs began to whack their floor with a broom handle. "I guess someone up there wants to take a nap," my mother brought out, rocking very fast now. So my sister, sighing, closed the piano at last and Milt, mopping his face, finally took a rest. Emily, who at that time was about twenty and saucy, said it was a pity that some people did not appreciate a fine voice.

To be brief about the matter, after singing until he was hoarse and eating some light refreshments Emily served us, Milt had fallen for my sister, head over heels. I should have warned him or told him something, for she had a steady fellow and was just stringing Milt along. At about ten o'clock he and I took a long walk along the side streets and I should have told him then. Still, the chances are he wouldn't have believed me, so I kept the news to myself. We strolled along the dark streets under the trees and soon he started to speak. He spoke, again, about his future. The tea my sister had served him had somewhat cured his hoarseness and he spoke with fire about what he would do after graduation in June. First, of all, for adventure he was going to get a job as seaman and work himself down to Jamaica and the Indies or maybe to the Argentine. He'd do it the coming summer. Our senior year, flying by, was almost over and after graduation he wanted to come to grips with adventure, with life, he said. He hesitated, when I inquired about his plans after such a trip. "Well," he told me, "mother wants me to be a dentist and she's developed a bad heart and I suppose for a while I'll have to humor her along. I'm going to dental school in the fall, I guess." He said it deadily but I remarked that dentistry seemed a solid, a steady profession, and if you— But he looked at me murderously. "Oh, you!" he cried, but calmed down as we walked under the trees.

Well, the long and short of it was that he took to coming up to our house pretty often. My father started to holler. At that time he had begun reading Robert Ingersoll on Sunday afternoons and he wanted to be undisturbed. My sister, too, her curiosity gone, had long since tired of playing accompaniments on the piano. And my older brothers, to tell the truth, were losing their tempers. I pacified them all by saying, "In another month he graduates and is going to Jamaica."

"Well, well," mumbled my father, "perhaps we've been too hard on the boy. If his family is moving so far off, I feel sorry instead of angry."

"It's not his family, just himself. He's going there for adventure."

"Ha, ha," growled Jack, my oldest brother. "An adventurer, eh? Well, ha, ha, ha."

And that's how Milt got his nick-name. He came over a few more times before graduation and after he was gone Jack would say, "Treat him kindly, folks, he's an adventurer. Be good to him, sirs."

Then came the graduation exercises, on a hot night in June. The senior class sat on the platform in the high school auditorium while Mr. Walsh, the principal, made the same address, according to my brothers, that he had been making during the last thirty years. "Only he coughs before he says 'Ladies and gentlemen,'" Jack brought that out. "He coughs at that moment for effect."

At any rate, the exercises went off smoothly; in fact, it was said afterward that there seemed to be more life in the ceremony than usual. And for this the credit had to be given to Milt Gilson, for when his turn came to speak as class prophet he brought down the house. He made the best address heard in years, speaking with conviction and power. The title of his address was: "The class prophecy of 1921, in 1940." He chose the date 1940, he explained, because in nineteen years all of the graduates on the platform would be definitely settled. "And some of us will be living in far places," he told the assembled parents and relatives in the auditorium. "Yes, fate will perhaps call some of us to the West Indies, to China. And others shall be settled here in Chicago, as good citizens. But it is of those hardy souls about to strike out for distant lands and climes—yes, it is of those adventurers about whom I would speak. To them I address these words. History is made by the daring, the adventurous. By 1940, perhaps one or two of us will already have inscribed his name upon the pages of the school books. And the students in this very place of learning will read about and revere his fame. Friends, relatives and dear parents, to the valiant!"

The house came down. Even Mr. Walsh, our principal, was visibly affected. He sat in his chair, clapping heartily. The ap-

plause was tremendous. Milt stood up to take a bow, his face stern, defensive. Looking to the side of the house where his family sat, I saw his mother moving her lips, in agitation. Then Mr. Walsh, standing up, gave out the diplomas; we all rose from our chairs and sang our school song and some of the girls, thinking of the good times they had had during their time here and realizing it was all over, began crying. After that we went home, and, the night being hot, my father gave my kid brother a half a dollar to go down to the corner and buy some ice cream. My mother brought out the cookies and my sister set the plates around.

A few days later, after graduation, Milt struck out for the West Indies and the Argentine. He wanted me to come along, but I refused. A neighbor, pulling wires, had gotten me a job as junior clerk in a wholesale coffee house so I couldn't follow. Besides, it must be hot as fire down in the Indies, I told my companion. Also, I had no money. "Neither have I," Milt answered. "We can hitch-hike to New York and see Niagara Falls while we're at it. Then we can catch a boat south and make for the Indies. Fruit boats, sugar boats, any boats will do."

But I had to refuse, even though I hated the wholesale coffee business. I had to refuse, because a job was a job. So he went off alone, with about ten dollars in his pockets. I had given him five, for it was all I could spare.

Two days later Mrs. Gilson rang me up, in excitement. "Fred, oh, dear Fred, do you know where my son Milt is? He said he was going to sleep overnight with you at the dunes."

"Why—why—that is—" I began to stammer, and the story jumped out.

"Oh, please come over," she pleaded. "I'm afraid, so alarmed about him—"

So I hurried over. On the way to the Gilson house I, too, became alarmed, and the sight of Mrs. Gilson, when I arrived, certainly gave me a fright. Her face was gray and drawn, her eyes were large and startled. I did not know it at the time but she had suffered a heart attack the day of our graduation, and the departure of her son when she was slowly recovering did not do her any good. I stood around awkwardly talking, assuring her Milt could take care of himself. "He'll be back in a few weeks," I kept repeating. "It's wanderlust, that's all. He'll be back soon, I'm sure of it."

"Well, I hope so," she said desperately, helplessly. "Mae," she called out, "please get something to eat on the table for Fred." And though I protested, Mae, the pretty sixteen-year-old one, came in from the other room, holding a book in her hand. I gobbled a few cookies, sipped at the coffee and, making some excuse or other, fled.

In about five days Milt came back, tired out and dusty. He had gotten as far as Niagara Falls, then his money had run out. He had tried to work himself east to Manhattan, offering his services to farmers and wayside lunchrooms; but he was forced, in the end, because they would not "cooperate," to beat his way home.

And that put a check upon his wanderlust that summer. The days that July and August were certainly scorchers, that's what. The wind blew toward the city in gusts from the prairie, hot as fire. Mrs. Gilson, in August, suffered a slight prostration and Milt, beating his breast dramatically, blamed himself for the attack. In a few days, however, as things grew cooler and his mother recovered, he was again talking of adventure, grinding his jaws. The summer, almost over, was definitely dying and it was now or never, Milt told me; he wanted to go away.

However, when September arrived, he enrolled in a dental college and started his studies. And within the next few months, our paths diverging, he dropt out of sight. At the end of my second year with the wholesale coffee house, though I had no urge to travel, I was transferred down to a branch office in Houston, Texas, as book-keeper and while there I studied advanced accounting and later was re-transferred to Chicago, with a slight increase in pay.

Then, about three summers after graduation, Milt crossed my path again. Telephoning unexpectedly one evening, he said, "Why not have a talk like old times?" Meeting, he told me he had completed over half of his studies and confessed he had gotten in touch with me because he had to tell some one he could no longer endure the prospect of his career. "To stare into peoples' mouths for years, for cavities, is appalling!" And he began discussing escape, his voice ringing out. I saw his intensity had not lessened, his dramatics had not died. "Listen," he told me, "let's strike out together. By the look on your face, I know you, too, are fed up." Well, to tell the truth, he was right, I was pretty sick of my job. "If I could only get an interesting position—" I ventured, but Milt stared at me with hate. "Oh, you!" he cried dramatically, "is your heart made of straw?"

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WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS:

A Possible Sort of Song

—through metaphor to reconcile
(compose)
the people and the stones. Compose
(no ideas but in things)
invent!

Saxifrage is my flower, that splits
the rocks—
and harlequin and columbine.
Let the snake wait under
his weed

for flies and spiders and the writing
be of words
slow and quick, sharp
to strike, quiet to wait
sleepless.

the U. S.
a green light

of the subway
entrance

to let spring ask
is the world

at the World's Fair
any more

than an action sings—
By suggestion.

As science, too, posted
after all smells

carefully fostering
cadres

not grudging
time

on patiently
“bothering”.

KENNETH PATCHEN:

'The Dogs of The Sky'

The dogs of the sky
Run to his will.
They are clumsy
With love of Him.

Their eyes glow above the world.
I turn my heart in knowledge
Of their ways. They watch me.

He tells them to watch me.
They watch me at his command.

They dig in the rubbish of my city.
It seems that what they dig
Is a grave.

MERRILL MOORE:

To An Explorer

This was a crater worthy of the name
Covered with smoke and filled with steam and flame
Wherein you fell when your legs were overcome
After your eyes were blind and your lips were dumb.
Those who saw you start the slow ascent
Could not describe the step with which you went.
Those who saw you slip and crash within
Riveted their stare on the spot where you had been.

But now let us gather cinders and pumice dust
To show as witness to those who feel they must
Erect a cenotaph since you are shattered
Far from the island where your ash is scattered
Over the mainland and the crashing waves,
To them who will someday fill prosaic graves.

LOUIS ZUKOFSKY:

From "Anew"

A last cigarette
a companion

dark, spring's
green smells

and the work
is in mind

a love's
unclouding it

apposite
by opposite

the spontaneous
idea

is not yet placed
called up

by its connections
reaches

ALAN SWALLOW:

A Day In 1942

This door opens on wind and snow: you stand
In the blizzard with miserable, withered hand.
Come in, come in from the cold.
The day grows old.

Was this the storm we expected?
Once our words predicted
Cold, blood, famine, pestilence,
Man losing time and sense.

What let this fury from high heaven?
Or so we talk—and, needful, driven
To speak of causes, on which the firmament streams,
And Christ's blood dropping, dream by dream.

The house grows cold and chatters
In roof-tree and rafters
Over the face of fear.
The storm has found us here.

LANGSTON HUGHES:

Little Old Letter Blues

It was yesterday morning
That I looked in my box for mail.
Yesterday morning
I looked in my box for mail.
The letter that I found there
Made me turn snow pale.

Just a little old letter
That wasn't but one page long.
A little old letter—
One little old page long,
But it made me wish I
Was in hell and gone.

I turned that letter over,
Nary word writ on the back.
Turned it over,
Nothing on the back.
I never felt so lonesome
Since I was born black.

Just a pencil and paper,
You don't need no gun or knife.
A pencil and paper,
Don't need no gun nor knife—
Cause a little old letter
Can take a person's life.

KARL J. SHAPIRO:

The Gun

You were angry and manly to shatter the sleep of your throat;
The kiss of your blast is upon me, O friend of my fear,
And I savour your breath like a perfume as salt and austere
As the scent of the thunder of heaven that brims in the moat!

I grip you. We lie on the ground in the thongs of our clasp
And we stare like the hunter who starts at a tenuous cry;
We have wounded the wind with a wire and stung in the sky
A white hole that is small and unseen as the bite of the asp.

The smooth of your cheek—Do you sight from the depth of your
eye

More faultless than vision, more true than the aiming of stars?
Is the heart of your hatred the target of redness of Mars
Or the roundness of heart of the one who must stumble and die?

O the valley is silent and shocked. I absolve from your name
The exaction of murder, my gun. It is I who have killed.
It is I whose enjoyment of horror is fine and fulfilled.
You are only the toy of my terror, my emblem of blame.

Come with me. We shall creep for his eyes like the sweat of
my skin,

For the wind is repaired and the fallen is calling for breath.
You are only the means of the practical humor of death
Which is savage to punish the dead for the sake of my sin!

Melbourne

The planted palms will keep the city warm
In any winter, and the toy Yarra flow
With boats and lovers down the grass. From walls
The flowers spring to sack the very streets
And wrought-iron tendrils curl upon the air.
The family's sex is English, and all their pain
More moderate than a long-expected death.

Yet the lipstick is poor, the girls consent
To loose their teeth and hips, and language whines,
Raising the pitch to shrill humility.
At five o'clock the pubs roar on the world
And milk bars trickle pardon, as the mobs
Lunge, worse than Chicago, for the trains
Dispersing life to gardens and to tea.

Also in suburbs there is want of vice,
And even the dogs are well-behaved and nice.
Who has extracted violence like the fang,
Leaving in early minds the simile
Castration? Who watching at night the film
Suffers the technicolor King to spread
Exalted, motionless, into their dream?

For blue and diluted is this nation's eye,
Wind-worn with herding and great distances
That were not made for cities. This was a land
Laid for the park of loneliness of Earth,
And giant imagination and despair.
Who reared this sweet metropolis abides
By his own error, more profound than war.

Only my love can spare the wasted race
That worships sullenly the sordid sheep.
She shall be governor with her golden hair!
And teach the landscape laughter and destroy
With her free naked foot the matchwood quay:
Buildings themselves shall topple where she dances
And leap like frogs into the uproarious sea!

ROBERT McALMON:

Autumn After The Fall

When I returned to the small town after the occupation
the haywild odour scented the countryside
where fields of clover lay uncut, drying in the sun.
This time though, the scent did not drunken senses to delirium.
Flowers were blooming in gardens whose owners had fled,
flowers becoming wild as weeks, neglected in uncared for acres.
Vegetable fields were covered with weeds,
the plots unharvested, the nursery help, all young men,
long ago mobilized and now prisoners in Germany
or slaves of the new order sold them by corrupt leaders.

My old horse friends were long gone from the fields,
once to serve in army troops, now perhaps as meat,
and the racehorses, too highstrung to be useful in battle
had long since been butchered, even those from the Duke's
stables.

He had not been able to feed them and there had been
no thought of riding to the hounds or of races.
His stable boys had been in the army as was he.
The stray dogs were gone, cats were rare.
The stable of deer hounds had been gassed months ago
being too expensive to feed and now admittedly useless.

The small lake by the old chateau was rank with water weeds,
parched water lily pads crumbling on the clear water surface.
What few mudhens remained stayed warily on the far bank
and disappeared at once at the tramp of feet on the road.
Two kid goats were a sprightly and goat dance capricious
as goat kids are erratic, but the nanny's bleat was wistful.

There was no Papillon, the seventy year-old drunk.
Langouste, his wine bibing son had disappeared too.
Cannibal, who when last I saw him, had been just blossoming
into a true clocharde of the countryside, dressed in tatters.
He was here now but his face no longer red with alcohol.
Too few of the villagers had wine or the money to pamper him.
Many of the older ladies, mothers, greeted me, sadly cordial.

They spoke of their sons, my friends, and few knew where they were.

There was to be no Tony and Armande walking up the hill gaily drunk and singing 'Dans le Nuite Mystereux' as they and I staggered through the woods up the hill there to dance in the bistrot of the orchard surrounded townlet. Marcel would come no more. Dunkirk had been the last of him. Andre was a prisoner in Germany or perhaps doing forced labour.

No fairs were there to be this year, no travelling circuses. Leander's blue mandril had escaped the fall before and the road was crowded with refugees. He bit a screaming woman.

The soldiers shot him, and then shot the mangey lion and bear. Leander left his gaily decorated circus caravan by the roadside. It was still there, turned over into the ditch.

Leander did not bother. He had no more circus. He stayed drunk and would soon have been a rebellious muttering clocharde but clochardes knew that the Germans had no sympathy or humour.

Staunchly however Mme. Molat cursed, to me, the Germans. She told them she had no coffee, no eggs. The German privates—and they were not the first—were impressed by her savage tongue.

Mme. Mestivier was sheepish about having become a refugee. Her epicerie had been pillaged, as had the Auberge St. Pierre. Perhaps had they and the other shop keepers stayed they could have made profit out of the Germans, but terror betrayed them.

They had joined the millions fleeing in all directions without direction.

They returned to pillaged homes and empty wine cellars. In the sheepishness of the townspeople who had fled there was a brave show of gaiety, turning ironic at time as they made blague of each other's refugee experiences.

Perhaps, their spirit told me, something might be recovered. Surely the town would struggle through the occupation and there could be no further fleeing now. The flowers and vegetables were struggling against weeds and the choke of the weeds had not quite smothered all bloom. War and weeds have no deeper roots than love-nurtured growths.

I left the small town to which I had returned. The German officers occupying the chateau upset me. One saying brightly, in too good English, 'I hope America won't be foolish and get into the war' particularly I resented. The too mechanical soldiers, the tanks and cannon trucks and the constant policing was too much to bear. I had returned to be amongst the French. My resentment of Germany was too deep seated in the memory of her history and philosophy. It would not have been possible to be discreet and keep quiet. The depopulated countryside was lonely and I had no use for thought.

It could not in this situation avail against emotion.

As I left the village, passing the small lake, I stood to watch the last brood of little mudhens walking on weeds and dried lily pads, to dive as I approached. The ten mile walk to Saint Remy to catch the metro to Paris—this walk could be brisk enough to take the place of all thought.

NORMAN MACLEOD:

The Revolution of The Syllable

I have praised the look of a poem with hurt,
Contracted the novel with knowledge, and roughly
Turned each last leaf under its weather, but truth
Is brittle, its terror under a least laugh cracks
Whatever glance would press unfriendly advantage
And black the white look bent to its populace.

The people starve but who will furnish
The mind's food? The poems are block busted,
Words fly at every image, flock in idiot sequence,
Turn and strike the back of a sentence:

Let each poem be lifted from its lexicon,
The separate syllable search the question
And lie hard, masculine as a wire,
Upon another syllable like fire—

A kiss for childbirth
In love's lean repertoire.

The Burning Cactus

The cactus of Christmas blooms its hurt and flower,
Fire sale or midnight, before the dry tongue licks its death
In the customer's sarcophagus and friendless hour.

Discover the consecrated ash in the bone's marrow,
Narrow and without evil egress, stoppered at the joints:
There is no point to its seal and silence, no point

To search the seed's remembrance, flake or furrow.
Now look to the spilled eye that would bounce like a marble
But widened its pool of remorse, so take the flower

Out of its vein and leave each name its choice
While a world turns on its edge as the rain its sunset:
—Not even words instinct with death rejoice.

MARYLAND

ARONA PODNOS:

The Worker and the Boss,

The Policeman and the Hoss

Once upon a time there was a boss. He had one hundred men working for him. He also had ten horses working for him.

Business was good and the men worked all day. So did the horses. The men, in return for their work, received good wages. The horses, in return for their work, were given a good stable and plenty of hay. Business became better and the men worked extra hours. For that they were paid higher wages. All went well.

Then business began to slacken. It got dull and the boss could not sell the goods that were piling up in his warehouse.

The boss began to think, "What am I to do with the men? What am I to do with the horses?"

After thinking for a while, he decided to call the men together. They entered his office and he addressed them as follows:

"Men, I've treated you pretty nicely, haven't I?"

"Yes, sir," they answered.

"I paid you higher wages when you worked extra hours, didn't I?"

"Yes, sir," they answered.

"Now," he said, "the orders have fallen off and the goods you made are piling up in my warehouse. I am sorry but I can't use you until the goods are sold. Therefore, I must fire you. You are discharged."

With bowed heads the men walked out in utter silence.

As soon as the men left, the boss began to think to himself. Thought he: "I got rid of the men easily, but what can I do with the horses?" After thinking a while, he decided to do with the horses what he had done with the men.

He went to the stable and got in front of the horses and began to address them as follows:

"Horses, I've treated you pretty nicely, haven't I?"
But horses are just dumb animals and they only neighed.
"For your day's work I gave you a stable and plenty of hay, didn't I?"

But horses are dumb animals and they only neighed.
"You see," he said, "business is dull and I can't use you any longer. Therefore, you are discharged."

But horses are dumb animals and they just stood there and neighed. When the boss saw this, he opened the stable door, and patting the dumb horses on their flanks, led them out of the stable into the great world outside.

Did you ever see horses walking alone in the street, without anyone to lead them? They walk zigzag. A policeman saw the horses. He gathered them together and began walking up the street. He saw a man and said:

"Mister, do you know these horses?"

"No, sir," said the man. The policeman and the horses marched on. He saw another man.

"Mister, do you know these horses?" he inquired.

"Yes, sir," said the man. "These horses and I worked for Mr. Jones."

"Where is Mr. Jones?" the policeman asked.

"Come and I will show you," said the man.

So the worker, the policeman and the horses began to march. After walking for sometime, the worker pointed to the second floor of a building and said, "There is Mr. Jones."

The policeman yelled at the top of his voice, "Mr. Jones! Mr. Jones!"

Jones opened the window and looked out. The policeman asked, "Do you know these horses?"

"Yes," answered Mr. Jones, "they used to belong to me. But I couldn't make a profit on their labor any longer, so I let them go."

"Oh, you did," said the policeman, "don't you know the law about horses? Don't you know that it's against the law to let horses starve? Don't you know that when horses belong to you, you have to take care of them? Do you want the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals to arrest you?"

Mr. Jones was scared by this, came down, took the horses, put them in a stable and began to feed them. The worker looked on interestedly, and after a while, he moved nearer to the policeman, nudged him in the ribs and said:

"Say, officer, you made Mr. Jones take care of those horses. I used to work for him too. Can't you make him take care of me?"

The policeman looked at him in amazement and then said disgustedly, "What do you think you are? A horse?"

PAULINE HOWLAND:

Fragment

The humming tires of speeding trucks sing on the distant highway. A street light pokes a white finger through my windowpane, and in its radiance, leaf shadows dance on the foot of my bed like vague, expressive hands. Outside my window a silvery-grey night enfolds the town, as gentle and soft as sweet music. And within the room a thick, heavy blackness oppresses me, stifling me with its sterile possessiveness. Where are those trucks going? So swift and purposeful they sound. To some glittering city, perhaps to some other sleeping town?

A stair creaks and I sit bolt upright, heart pounding, straining to hear some further sound. Silence. Nothing but the pulsing throb of the blood in my ears. I lie back again and watch the shadows of the leaves caper mockingly on the footboard.

An airplane flies overhead, winging its way through the night. I follow its lights, holding my breath each time they blink behind a tree-limb reared against the sky. There—it has passed out of sight, carrying its burden of human life onward towards its destination. Each night I have watched that plane go past, and now, as every night, I wonder about the nameless ones who have come so close to me and yet remain so far away, separated by a few thousand feet of space and an eternity of purpose.

Why do I feel so alone here—so shut off from the world and the living? Why does the aching emptiness in my breast cry out with such a silent entreaty? What is this nameless wanting that threatens to choke me, that pushes against the hot embrace of this blackness about me, that cries out to follow the song of the humming tires and the distant drone of the airplane?

POLLY HARDY:

Mr. Daniels

The first time I saw Mr. Daniels was early last summer when I went to him to apply for a job. He was at that time superintendent and personnel manager of the manufacturing division of a small war plant. He had numerous other odd tasks, but those were his two principal ones. The grounds of this defense plant were well enclosed by a high barbed wire fence, and grounds and fence were guarded by a fierce looking police dog. No one was allowed through the gate without a pass. The interviewing, therefore, was carried on in a quaint old shack just outside the fence called the guard house. I later learned that it was not uncommon for a prospective employee to wait all morning in that guard house for an interview with Mr. Daniels, but I was fortunate. I had only been there a few minutes when he came streaming around the corner yelling at the top of his lungs. I heard that treacherous voice before I saw him—

"What in the devil is the matter with you guards?" And then he was standing there beside me. I shrank unwittingly. There was just room for me. He was as big as his voice. He stood well over six feet, but he wasn't only tall, he was just plain *big*. He was dressed in wash pants and a white shirt. His sleeves were cut off just above the elbows, and his tie was mussed and black and only half knotted. He had very little hair, which he kept pushing back off his forehead in a gesture of exasperation. His features were big like the rest of him.

He shouted to the guard for several minutes and then turned and saw me.

"What is it, lady, what is it?" he bellowed at me. I mumbled something about wanting to see him about a job, but before I had finished he had snatched my application from my hand and was scanning it hurriedly. He opened it to the page that gave my record of education. "Did you graduate?"

"No." I stared to go on to say that I had another year to complete, but he cut me short.

"No excuse, no excuse," he roared. "Never start something you can't finish. What good will a college education do you without a diploma? Tell me that, lady."

By this time I was becoming a little angry. He glanced down my record of employment. During my three years in college I had worked at odd times on NYA projects, Student Aid, and the like. These jobs, of course, were finished when the school year ended.

"What's this?" He looked up, horrified. "Why didn't you stick at these jobs longer?" Again I tried to explain, but my self defense only angered him. "Never leave a job before you've worked at least a year. *Never*. Don't forget that, lady. Looks bad on your record."

By this time I had had about all I could stand. I took the application from him, my face red with anger.

"Be in Monday morning at eight o'clock," he growled, and rushed out of the guard house, leaving me with my mouth hanging open.

The guard was grinning happily. "You ain't seen nothin' yet, sister," he said as I walked away.

Eight o'clock Monday morning came much too soon. I was terrified. This was my first real job. My one hope was that I would be placed as far from Mr. Daniels as possible.

Eight o'clock found me waiting in the guard house with three very dirty little boys. My courage was dropping like a thermometer in a sudden blizzard. There was a different guard on duty, and I was glad of that. The sardonic grin of the other one kept looming before me.

The guard kept trying to locate Mr. Daniels but he had no success. Finally, at nine o'clock, he came bursting in, and when he saw us, turned to the guard, and yelled at him fiercely for not having let him know that we were there. Then he roared to us to follow him, and we all trekked through the gate, half running to keep up with him.

He led us through the grounds to a dingy little office about the size of a closet. Scattered here and there around the room were odd looking machine parts, and on the desk was a strange assortment of objects including several toy rubber tires, six boxes of tiny fuses, and piles of letters, memos, and the like. Except for the one at the desk, there was only one

chair in the room. I wiped some of the dust from it and sat down quickly. I felt weak. Mr. Daniels had disappeared. From some place, uncomfortably close, came the rattle and bang of machinery in action. I waited for some fifteen minutes, whiling away the time mentally cleaning and rearranging that sad looking office.

I heard him coming back from wherever he had been, the roar of his voice diminishing that of the machines to a near whisper. He looked happy when he entered the office.

"And now, lady," he said, smiling kindly at me, "I think we'll put you in personnel. Fill out the employment forms for those boys and yourself, and then I'll take your fingerprints. *Everyone* must be fingerprinted . . . Government regulations. The forms are in the file cabinet, I think." And he was gone again.

I started to call after him, but he was nowhere in sight. I squared my shoulders and went to the file cabinet. It was even more chaotic than the desk. After rummaging around for a while, I discovered some cards that looked as if they might be employment forms. I filled them out and went in pursuit of my new boss. After some trouble I found him in the stock room, screaming at the clerk. I waited politely until he paused for breath, and then I thrust my first bit of work under his nose.

"Land-o'-Goshen, lady, how dumb are you?" he roared. Then he took my arm in his huge hand and literally ran me back to his office. He then explained the procedure I was to go through when entering a new employee. I'm sure that there has never been invented such an involved system—four complicated forms to fill out, names to enter in his special diary, and name cards to enter on his employment chart. He was quite annoyed that I had forced him to explain it to me though, and kept mumbling that he couldn't understand how a college lady—it was always "lady"—could be so dumb. This was the only time he explained anything to me about his many complicated systems. I used other means of finding out; that one experience taught me that the less I bothered him, the better we would get along.

I had not been there long before I learned about the war that was being waged between the front and the back offices. Mr. Daniels was dictator of the back office, but his superiors reigned over him in the front. The truth was that Mr. Daniels was the only man in the organization who knew what was going on. He knew much more about the little defense weapon that was being manufactured there than the president himself. So his superiors blocked him at every turn as an indirect way of compensating for their inadequateness. This partly explained Mr. Daniel's frequent rages, but I think too that he got a distinct pleasure out of scaring us all to death.

He was fifty-three years old, as he told me on numerous occasions. He would tell me slowly, with awe and wonder in his voice. He loved to be dramatic. "Lady," he would say, "do you realize that I am *fif-ty-three* years old?" Then my part would be to stare at him with the same awe and wonder and say, "*Really*, Mr. Daniels?" Sometimes I would say, "*No*, Mr. Daniels!"

In truth I *was* filled with awe and wonder. I have never seen a man half his age with so much energy and drive. He seldom walked anywhere. He sometimes trotted along, but most of the time he ran. He was in a constant, frantic hurry. At first I was never able to find him when I needed him, but I soon discovered that if I stood in one spot I could usually catch him as he rushed by. He had held his job for over two years, and had never taken a day off—not even a Sunday. He seldom left his office before midnight, and often stayed until two or three o'clock in the morning. He occasionally groaned about how he needed a vacation, but he never stopped running.

He loved his job, and treated the weapon which this defense plant manufactured as if it were his own child. When the battle between him and the front office (we always referred to his superiors as the "front office") got so bad that he knew he would either have to resign or be fired, his only thought was the welfare of his "baby." He kept one on his desk, and when he told me that he was going to leave, he held it tenderly in his hand while he talked.

"This whole place can go to hell," he said, "but I hate to leave this little devil. I love it. It's caused me more high blood pressure and sleepless nights than my own children, but I love it. I've spent hours and hours working on it, even made some of the improvements on it. . . . Yep, I hate to leave it, lady, but I've got to." Then he scowled and rushed out of the office, toward the front office—refreshed and ready for another fight.

He gave me one of his prized toy rubber tires as a going away present, and I'll never part with it.

As much as he loved to catch his workers in the wrong so that he could tear out his lungs screaming at them, he took as much interest in their problems as if he were father to all of them. And they had their problems! They were all unskilled laborers; most of them hadn't got beyond the second or third grade in school. Hardly a day went by that one of them didn't come in the office to ask for his help. Usually they asked what doctor to send for, how to borrow money, what to do about the son who was always getting into trouble, or the like. Sometimes, however, their problems were more serious, and Mr. Daniels, frantic and busy as he was, always had time to listen.

I remember one morning when Mrs. Brown from the temperature tube line came in to see Mr. Daniels about her marital troubles. Her husband, who was one of the guards at the plant, had been coming home drunk and beating her. This she had borne stoically, but the night before Mr. Brown had taken their only son, announcing that he was going to take him across the state line. Mrs. Brown told all this in her impassionate monotone, but the very fact that she had come to him for help showed Mr. Daniels that she was afraid.

He listened to her as she calmly told her story, and then asked, "What do you want him to do, Mildred?"

"I just want him to git away an' leave me alone," she said.

Mr. Daniels picked up the phone and asked for the police. He told them the story briefly, and then hung up. "Back to your temperature tubes, Mildred," he roared, "and stop worrying. Everything will be OK with the law on our side."

He pushed her out of his office, and then rushed back to the phone. "Give me the guard house," he screamed to the operator. When the guard answered, Mr. Daniels' voice had changed completely. It was low and mysterious and threatening. "Brown out there? . . . He is? . . . Well, tell him he'd better get outta there in a hurry if he knows what's good for him, because the police are after him. . . . That's what I said, the police!" And with that he banged down the phone and went back to his work as if nothing had happened.

Everyone who came in contact with him had to put up with his unpredictable moods, but I think the telephone operators had a worse time than the rest of us. Many of his battles with the front office were carried on over the inter-office telephones. After the worst of these, livid with rage, he would bang down the receiver, then pick it up immediately, and give the operator merry hell—as a means of release for his anger. Those operators didn't take it lying down, however. They would wait until he was out of the office, then call me up and give merry hell right back to me. It was a very complicated merry-go-round.

And then another time, and for no apparent reason, he would pick up the receiver and have a long intimate chat with any operator who happened to be on duty. They would discuss her eyes, her lovely hair, her pleasant voice, her sex appeal, and anything else that he might think of.

Something that happened late one morning must have completely confounded the operator on duty. Mr. Daniels came bustling into the office with a terrific scowl on his face, and headed toward the phone. He asked the operator for Mr. Welsh, the one in the "front office." The operator told him that Mr. Welsh hadn't come in yet, and it was the wrong thing to say. Mr. Daniels was in his office every morning by eight o'clock, and the fact that everyone else wasn't as punctual infuriated him. He obviously had it in for Mr. Welsh about something anyway, and this last blow was too much. His face went white, but his voice came out sweet and soft.

"Oh," he said very softly, "he isn't *in* yet. The hours some of us can keep. . . ." Then he began to recite dramatically to the girl whom he had never seen, "the hours I spend with you, dear heart, are like a string of pearls to me." Then, without warning, he bellowed, "GODDAMNIT!!" and slammed the receiver down with a mighty crash. It all happened so quickly that I jumped clear out of my chair and let out an involuntary scream. He turned and looked at me anxiously.

"Lady, maybe you should take vitamin pills. You're getting awfully nervous," he said with great concern.

As the end of the summer vacation approached, I could hardly wait to quit my job so that I could enjoy a little peace and quiet before school started again. My nerves were shattered, and I grew tired of catering to the whims of my unbelievable boss.

Yet, when my last day arrived, I dreaded having it end. Mr. Daniels and I spent that whole day putting things over on the front office—with great glee and hilarity.

ARTHUR O'KEEFE:

Poem

The earth was bringing a new dawn to birth
As the jewels of her bewitchment cooled:
The tender, shining tendrils of new love.
We walked amid the sunny heads of daffodils
And I pushed aside the bushes
That were blooming with green bonnets
Until the dark flowing stream appeared
And we sat by the singing water:
Her face was framed by the forest
Of her brown hair: I listened to her speech
And loved. Just as the wind
Runs out of breath in the grass,
So did I want to kiss and caress her.

Then a bird with a bright red breast
In the song of his kingdom
Asked if I loved her:
My earth had been cleansed with tears,
And the beauty of a delicate white rose
Bled dew drops in the sunset.

How could I answer how I love?
And without her presence in life
I shiver and die, speechless
As the wind caught at its center.

ARTHUR O'KEEFE:

The Search

The skies have cleared
And the orange grove of clouds
Stares with its fluff and frill
Into the naked bosom of the night goddess
Who shivers and pulls close her robe.

I am like a small bird
Alone on this prairie of night
And guided by the campfire of stars
I must wing on and on,
 Darting from blaze to blaze,

Always on watch for the elusive firefly
And fling myself into that abyss of the unknown
Until my bead-like eyes are shattered
By fatigue's hammer.

ARTHUR O'KEEFE:

Death

Silence filled the air
Silence swam through marble corridors:
It was the silence that lingers with the flutter of doves
From beneath a vine-clad cave,
Or the dew-budded quiet
Which greets the dawn,
And the tender caress of white-lipped waves
Upon a sugar-coated shore.
This was my greeting as I sailed beyond
And stepped trembling and seaweed clad
Upon the mystical shore.

ROBERTA KELLs:

Poem

Into the night that burdened me
There sprang one clear bright star.
One star, but Oh, how clear it was,
How beautiful it seemed.
One star, but in its diamond light
There shone
All love, all hope and all desire.
Had not my night been quite so black
My star would not have shone so bright.

FAITH ELIZABETH FARQUHAR:

Poem

In my frightened youth
 of hills the sun has danced upon,
 of rain which weaves the earth to sky,

There is intoxication
 which sends the bitten senses reeling
In the frost of loneliness.

HARRY BACAS:

Poem

To say that he is the more powerful
Writer
Is to make an arbitrary distinction.
De gustibus . . .
We must consider all things,
Each in its place
And remain broadminded, if not impartial.
And yet it seems to me that you have
Left yourself open for a disastrous
Rebuttal.

ANN PATERSON:

Walk Through The Snow

The sunken orchard was cupped
In the white hands of fresh snow.
Our path led down through black trees
The night sky faded into the edge of near horizon
Thick clouds that space is made of:

There was only the soft thud of our footstep;
I breathed, and my breath was part of the blanketing mist:
I looked before me into silence
Until, suddenly, we stopped
And I whispered
"This is what death looks like."

He switched at a branch
With the stick in his hand,
The sharp snow fell across my face:
Laughing, we ran to the top of the hill
A hundred home-lights lay below us.

Just once I glanced
Back over my shoulder
At the white shadow
Of the orchard.

WILBUR G. McCOLLOM:

The Present Value of Chekhov

On the occasion of the recent showing in Washington of *The Three Sisters*, Mme. Litvinoff remarked that Russia is no longer interested in Chekhov's pictures of life under the old regime. The melancholy of the girls who sit in their drawing room and nurture their hopeless dream of going to Moscow, the anguish of that Uncle Vanya who grinds away his life supporting an idle professor, and then revolting, draws a pistol, fires, and misses!—all this seemed to Mme. Litvinoff futile and unimportant. On the week following the showing of *The Three Sisters*, the new Soviet play, *The Russian People*, came to town. Written by a war correspondent on the Russian front, *The Russian People* records the Red Army's resistance to the German invasion. This production Mme. Litvinoff found to be of the greatest significance.

Unfortunately, *The Russian People* is little more than a piece of dramatic journalism. Although its production in Russia was enthusiastically received, the play lacked the eloquence and the humanity necessary to carry it beyond its time and place. After a short run in New York, it closed. *The Three Sisters*, on the other hand, gives every evidence of being very much alive. On the eve of the German invasion of Russia, the Moscow Art Theatre "showed the continuity of the old Russian culture with the new", by presenting this very play. At the present writing, *The Three Sisters*, which reached Broadway just before *The Russian People*, has already outlasted the Soviet play by a good many weeks.

Chekhov's plays are distinguished by his patient and loving portraiture of the soul of man, his expression of the *mal du siècle*, and his vision of social regeneration. Like Turgenev

1. H.W.L. Dana, *The Russian Review*, November, 1941.

before him, he was willing to sacrifice plot to character; for by exhibiting and reexhibiting his people in characteristic moments, he could reveal the better their essential qualities. Again and again Gaev absently mutters comments on an imaginary game of billiards, Yelena complains of her boredom, Chebutykin flagellates himself for his ignorance. The air becomes redolent of the personalities of each. Temperaments clash. An oppressive silence closes in, to be broken by commonplaces that in their context are doubly oppressive. Marya reproaches her son, Voynitsky, for not working.

VOYNITSKY. Working? It is not everyone who can be a writing machine like your Herr Professor.

MARYA. What do you mean by that?

SONYA (in an imploring voice). Grandmamma! Uncle Vanya! I entreat you!

VOYNITSKY. I'll hold my tongue—hold my tongue and apologize.

(A pause).

YELENA. What a fine day. It's not too hot.

All is not gloom, however. Though the plays are hardly comedies, as Chekhov pretended to think, they are full of a wry humor, and the quality of their pathos often veers from the melancholy to the laughable. Moreover, a small group of definitely comic characters, including Chebutykin, Telyegin, and Epikhodov, alleviate the sombre tones of the tableaux in which they appear.

Chekhov's "heroes" are seldom heroic; but if played understandingly, they have a charm perceptible not only in a decadent era. Vanya's lines are full of complaint and recrimination, but Chekhov explains, even justifies, this character by revealing that his disillusionment is the direct result of his trusting and self-sacrificing generosity. Vershinin and Trofimov do nothing significant, but their idealism is infectious. And the unassuming heroism of characters like Olga and Sonya disproves the charge that there is nothing but futility in Chekhov.

Though Chekhov lived in an era seething with revolutionary and counter-revolutionary activity, he held himself aloof from political questions, refusing to admit that he was either a "liberal" or a "conservative". As Shaw wrote, most of Chekhov's characters had no wish "to realize Utopia for the common people: they wished to realize their favorite fictions and poems in their own lives; and, when they could, they lived without scruple on incomes which they did nothing to earn." Yet in each of the serious plays, the most thoughtful characters express their disgust with Russia at the end of the century and make astonishing prophecies of the coming upheaval. "We must work," says Trofimov, "we must work with all our powers to aid the seekers after truth. Here among us in Russia the workers are few in number as yet." But a change is inevitable. Happiness "is coming nearer and nearer; already I can hear its footsteps." Even more striking are the words of Tusenbach.

The time is at hand, an avalanche is moving down upon us; a mighty cleansing storm, which is coming, is already near and will soon blow the laziness, the indifference, the distaste for work, the rotten boredom out of our society. I shall work, and in another twenty-five or thirty years every one will have to work. Every one!

Exactly seventeen years after these lines were written, the Bolsheviks seized their "historical broom," in Trotsky's phrase, and swept away the vestiges of bourgeois society in Russia.

In England, in the United States, and in Russia Chekhov's influence has been marked. Shaw wrote his *Heartbreak House* in frank imitation of Chekhov. In America talents as divergent as those of Odets and Saroyan have greatly profited by Chekhov's example. In Russia Alexander Afinogenov, perhaps the most impressive playwright to emerge under the Soviet regime, is at his best when he is most Chekhovian.

Chekhov would be greatly surprised to find himself being hailed as the prophet of the millenium. But if there emerges from the present war a world order cognizant on the one hand of the value of the individual soul and aware on the other of the necessity for collective action in the interest of all, the plays of Chekhov will continue to arouse the admiration of an ever-widening audience.

W. GORDON ZEEVELD:

Shakespeare and the Liberal Arts

The rapidly diminishing role of the liberal arts in American universities since war forced them upon the present lean diet has been the object of concern from many quarters. But it is disquieting that their defense has come for the most part from without rather than within. The seriousness of the situation

1. In his preface to *Heartbreak House*.

has been described with cogency by Irwin Edman in a recent issue of the *Nation*, in which he deplores the supineness of the teachers of the liberal arts at a time when they should smell battle. For the role of the liberal arts in wartime is being challenged as dispensable, and that challenge is not being met. Two steps seem necessary. In the first place, we must clear away the smug and pernicious view of Matthew Arnold that the humanities are their own reason for being, that knowledge—by which he meant a knowledge of the liberal arts—is its own end. This gentleman's agreement to withhold oneself from the world in a cocoon-like existence of its own is a relic of a state of society in which the liberal arts were restricted to free men. It was destroyed by Francis Bacon over three hundred years ago. In the second place, we must recognize the practical way in which the liberal arts function in the present day and the atrophy that results in purely technological and scientific pursuits. Science has demolished the ivory tower; the humanities must rediscover in man his humanity. From this point of view, Shakespeare's last play, *The Tempest*, constitutes a frame of reference.

Shakespeare had always recognized that man is first of all a human being. Roman emperors, English kings, and ordinary run-of-the-mill Italian dukes all have a way of becoming human beings after the first scene in his plays. But in *The Tempest*, Shakespeare addressed himself more consciously to the chief aim of the humanities—what to do with a world which is commonly called civilized, and which, when chance permits, reverts to barbarism.

The point of Shakespeare's departure in that play was apparently a page in Montaigne's essay "Of the Cannibals," which we know Shakespeare had been reading in John Florio's translation (1603). Said Montaigne of his and Shakespeare's generation:

But there was never any opinion found so unnaturall and immodest, that would excuse treason, treacherie, disloyaltie, tyrannie, crueltie, and such like, which are our ordinarie faults. We may then well call them barbarous, in regard of reason's rules, but not in respect of us that exceed them in all kinde of barbarisme.

To Montaigne's half serious question as to whether the ruthlessness of the barbarian is not matched by the ruthlessness of cultured man, Shakespeare gave a dramatic answer in *The Tempest*. With one eye on the tales of the voyagers to the New World, he placed Prospero, the banished Duke of Milan, on a remote island inhabited by creatures who have never known civilization, and then brought to them, by means of shipwreck, its most sophisticated products. It is the fine irony of the play that the conduct of Caliban, the native, and that of the Italian noblemen is equally unscrupulous. By throwing together on the island the old world and the new, Shakespeare corrected contemporary judgments of each in terms of man's inhumanity to man.

There is a pleasant surmise that Shakespeare was a school-teacher before he came to London. If this legend were true, Prospero, the schoolmaster of Shakespeare's last play, might well have represented the dramatist's examination of the place of the teacher as a civilizing agent for mankind. At any rate, one is not in the realm of conjecture in interpreting the play as an answer to those sceptics who on surveying the conduct of the civilized states of Europe found in them the characteristics of barbarians. Civilized man may be pretty much of a failure as a political and social animal, Shakespeare seems to be saying, but that does not mean that we should abandon hope for his improvement. The necessity is for a process of sophistication without loss of idealism.

As several recent critics have pointed out, Shakespeare was under no sentimental illusions with regard to the contemporary vogue for the noble savage. Gonzalo, the honest old counselor who expects to found Utopia on the island, is weaving dreams. For Caliban, a native of the island, however acutely sensible of its physical beauties, is incapable of taking the imprint of culture which Prospero has been at pains to inculcate. Wordsworth would have been at a loss to account for this product of nature "on whose nature nurture can never stick." Treated with ordinary humanity and granted his freedom, Caliban has sought to violate Prospero's daughter, his animal imagination stimulated by the idea of an island peopled with Calibans. As a consequence, he has been denied the freedom he does not deserve.

But it must be made clear at once that in spite of Caliban's unfitness for the liberal arts, Shakespeare was not thereby inferring, as Matthew Arnold inferred, that these studies are the peculiar province of the gentleman. The weight of Shakespeare's irony fell, in fact, not on the primitives, but on Prospero's brother and those other shipwrecked Italian noblemen. They represent the very flower of the most cultured society which Shakespeare knew; yet one discovers soon enough that a civil-

ized country too breeds incivilities. There is rich irony in the fact that while Caliban with his disreputable companions creeps with murderous intent upon his master, the usurping duke and his fellows are carrying out precisely, the same plan. They commit the very crimes of treason, treachery, and disloyalty which Montaigne names as "our ordinary faults." In all of these respects, they and Caliban are of a piece. There is nothing, one may conclude, in either Italy or the isle which in itself will bring out man's nobility.

It is precisely at this point, where primitivism and European civilization are alike rejected, that the teacher takes a central position in Shakespeare's thought. If man is to avoid the barbarities that are concomitant to either the primitive or the civilized life, he must undergo discipline; and that special discipline fundamental to man's well-being is the liberal arts. Caliban and the Italian nobles must be classed as pedagogical failures; but Prospero's job, as his name hints, is with a new generation. Miranda, his daughter, has been the object of his most careful training, though she still remains wholly unsophisticated. And therein lies her danger. She is unable to distinguish the genuine and the spurious. Shakespeare drew a significant parallel in the naive wonder that overcomes both Miranda and Caliban at their first meeting with Europeans. "A spirit. A thing divine," exclaims Miranda on seeing Ferdinand, the only man excepting her father on whom she has ever laid eyes. "Thou wondrous man," says Caliban, in ironic echo, swearing fealty to a drunken butler who has strayed from the wrecked ship. Confronted presently by the unsuspected perpetrators of her father's downfall, Miranda sees in them the same perfections she saw in Ferdinand:

O, wonder!
How many goodly creatures are there here!
How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world,
That has such people in't.

If she only knew! Trinculo, the jester offers the appropriate comment to Caliban's delusion: "A most ridiculous monster, to make a wonder of a poor drunkard!" And Prospero, remembering how ungood, how unbeauteous, how sordid that "new" world really is, for the moment contents himself with the cryptic comment: "Tis new to thee."

It would not do for such naivete to take up the duties of a European prince. Prospero, sophisticated by his experience first among civilized men and now among savages, is the indispensable agent of Miranda's education, an education which must be put to use in a polite but unidealistic Europe. With all of its beauty, the island is only an interlude, a controlled microcosm; ideal, not real. Sooner or later, Prospero's books of magic must be burned and the island left behind. One critic of the play has been puzzled by the fact that Prospero leaves the island with so little regret.¹ As a matter of fact, it was Shakespeare's consistent and settled conviction that the place of man is among men. He had already said as much in *As You Like It*, in *Cymbeline*, in *A Winter's Tale*. But in returning to a life among men, Miranda and Ferdinand must be idealistic yet ruled by reason; they must have the power to distinguish truth from sham; in brief, they must be schooled in the discipline of the humanities.

The world is in need of Prosperos.

1E. E. Stoll, "The Tempest," *PMLA*, XLVII (1932), 721-2.

The Murder of Ekaterina . . .

continued from page 5

"I'll make you sizzle like a bit of fried plaice," Neumann shouted.

Ekaterina clenched her teeth and kept silent.

At night a heart-rending shriek was suddenly heard all over the village. The shriek came from Ekaterina's hut. It was wafted in the cold night air along the line of houses and brought the startled people from their beds. Folks ran out of their houses listening to Ekaterina's shrieks, clenching their fists threateningly.

"They're torturing her," they said. "They're torturing Ekaterina. The swine."

And when Ekaterina's shrieks could no longer be heard, the whole village, men and women, old and young, without waiting for orders from above, silently snatched up a few belongings and made for the woods.

And there, under a birch, they dug her grave.

Somebody knocked a coffin together. Without shedding a tear they placed Ekaterina in the coffin; and silently, without tears, they lowered the coffin into the grave and covered it with earth.

The agronomist wanted to say something, something important, something that would pull at their heartstrings, but, looking at their faces, he realized that nothing need be said.

"They murdered her," he said. "How shall we avenge her?"

After that they each took a handful of earth from Ekaterina's grave and moved on through the dense woods, over the swamps, to their brothers, sisters, sons . . .

The sun peeped out. It thawed the golden catkins of the birches. Drops began to fall from the catkins and it seemed as though the birches were shedding tears over Ekaterina's grave.

That night the partisans, armed with sharp axes, with the agronomist Lyubin at their head, swooped down on the village of Vilki and wiped out all the Germans. They set fire to the village from every side and vanished.

One Quarter of an Hour . . .

continued from page 7

For a while I couldn't write; I walked round the cellar, rocking Tatiana. She cried in my arms: "Mamma, what is that ticking?" "That's a clock, darling. Listen to the clock ticking." "Mummie, let's go out of here. It's not a bit nice here. Mummie, are we going out soon?" "Very soon, my dear, very soon." "And you won't go without me?" "No, we shall go together . . . together."

She went to sleep and was quiet. Then there was silence in the street, too—they had all gone away. Now it must be very soon. "Tick, tock."

Good-bye, all my dear ones. Remember Tatiana and me sometimes. I don't know where exactly Lyosha is now. I hope they will broadcast on the radio, in "Letters to the Front," my last greeting to him, to my beloved. And you must write to him about yourselves, too, girls. Tell him how we fought behind the German lines. Write about everything. I can just imagine what the announcer will say: "Radimtsev, Alexei Petrovitch, we are broadcasting a message to you from your wife Antonian Kirilovan." Only I shan't hear it; I do hope the announcer will be a woman—she will understand how to read such a letter.

Lyosha, my dear, precious one. I know it will be very hard for you, a terrible blow, when you know . . . But you can be proud it was not in vain that you always trusted me. You see, I haven't let you down. Of course it is terrible for me too, Lyosha. And it's heart-breaking about our Tanya. She would have been a tall girl. She has often remembered you. But you will understand me. We have always understood one another, you and I, we had plenty of good times together, Lyosha. Do you remember how at College I was afraid of you at first. Do you remember the Volga? The mountains came right down to the water, brown at the foot, chalky white farther up, like dough? The boat goes quite close in to the shore. In our wake is a long curving wave which washes ashore the pebbles. Little boys row desperately to get outside our wake. I am standing with you in the very bow of the boat and I even lean forward over it while a little breeze fans our faces. We are standing there, holding each other's hands. And in front there is so much air that you can never breathe it all; and the water stretches so far into the distance that there is no limit and no end; and to-morrow it will be just the same, and the next week; and we shall stand all the time, just like that, side by side, arm in arm.

Or again, remember, in the Suramsky Pass, we touched the sky with our hands when the storm broke on us. Out of the

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cloud came a man with a shaggy cloak and a shaggy cap, as if he himself were clothed in cloud; he set before us a basket full of peaches and said to me: "Eat, and good health to you; greetings to you, you fortunate one. I see that you are lucky, for you have a faithful husband." . . . The whole of our country was before us, like that basket, bountiful, inviting. Life before us—how good it was to have been. I had had so little life, and how greedy I was; I should never be tired of life.

But now nothing of that will ever be mine. "Tick, tock," and then—full stop.

As Kipling says:

The tides of the Fendy Race will run out, but I will never cross. I will never see the traces on the sand, when the water runs out. I will never see the trawlers, floating far from the sandbanks, Nor meet the glow of the cargo boats, floating on the Sound at night.

Ah, how I should like to see the light again! By the way, where is this Fendy Race? I shall never know now.

You remember, Lyosha, they sometimes used to send for you urgently, fetch you straight from the cinema to the College, and you would sigh and say: "No, Antosha, see it through for me as well." Now, I am asking you: Lyosha, see it all through for me as well. And be happy for me, for the future, for the victory we all long for, for the right which is all on our side, I am ready to die. I have said it now! And already the horror of it has gone. Already that cursed "tick, tock" has stopped frightening me . . . Do you know what I have suddenly remembered. How we rode through Moscow—the Mail connection never arrived, and we went in a taxi. And now, here am I, sitting over an infernal machine, and the meter ticks with its metallic "tick, tock."

Enough! One mustn't breathe too strongly in the moment before death. Now I am going to place the letter in a shawl, tie it up with string, and throw it out of that little window up there. Our people will come and see it. Then we shall wrap ourselves in a blanket, my little daughter and I, and try not to hear the explosion. I embrace you for the last time, darling Lyosha. Let me kiss you even at this distance. I have just closed my eyes and seen you quite clearly. All's finished, Tonya.

To Senior Lieutenant Alexei Petrovitch Radimtsev.

On ascertaining your whereabouts we send you a letter from your wife, A. K. Radimtseva. Comrade Radimtseva was discovered when our forces recaptured the town of N. As our troops neared the house in the cellar in which Antonia Radimtseva was locked by the Germans, a note tied up in a woman's shawl was found in the snow; this note warned our men that the house was mined. In addition, hearing the voices of Red Army men near by, Comrade Radimtseva began calling out from the cellar to tell everyone to keep away from the house, since the explosion might take place at any moment. It appears that this did not stop our men, who ignored the danger and went into the cellar and brought out your wife and three-year-old daughter Tatiana. The explosion followed in four and a half minutes, destroying the whole building down to the foundation.

We inform you that the health of your wife and daughter at the present time is entirely satisfactory. Your daughter is well on the road to recovery. At first your wife suffered from a nervous affection, though she is now better. The only thing she cannot stand at present is the ticking of a clock.

Military Doctor (2nd class) Stepanov.

Every Year They Came Out . . . *continued from page 16*

long. He had died of a heart attack three weeks after it was completed.

Their mother had died three years before the judge's attack, and their older brother, Harvey, had been killed in the first World War in an airplane crash. He had voluntarily enlisted with the Canadians before the United States had gone in. There had seemed, at the time, no reason for his extremely hasty enlistment, but shortly after he had sailed for France, the Cuthrells had had an unwelcome visitor. She was a girl who had worked in the basement of Birnbaum's Department Store. She no longer worked there, however; they had let her out. She was pregnant. Even the Cuthrells could see that. The girl, whose name was Marjorie Jergenson, told them that the child she was going to have, in a few months, was Harvey's. The judge was furious. He had ordered her from the house. But after the judge's death, they had learned that he had given her money to go to Omaha and have the child. He had been sending her fifty dollars a month.

Miss Ernestine and Miss Cora never discussed Harvey. They would never, under any circumstances, discuss Marjorie Jergenson. If either of them ever thought of Marjorie Jergenson, they did not speak of her. They would talk about the judge, rever-

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ently and briefly, and they would talk about their mother, sadly and with nostalgia, and at considerable length; but Harvey and their younger brother, William, who had stayed in the East after a sensational two years at Princeton, and who drank heavily and had been divorced twice, were not subjects for discussion. There was still a comfortable income from the judge's estate; there was money in the bank back in Nebraska; and there was more money pinned to the inside of Miss Ernestine's corset, unpinned at night and placed cautiously beneath her pillow. Miss Ernestine and Miss Cora did not have to worry about finances.

They had many friends in Los Angeles. Quite a number of them lived in the hotel. They were people from the middlewest who spent the winter in much the same manner as Miss Cora and Miss Ernestine. In the morning there were automobile rides and in the afternoon there was bridge and in the evenings, the movies. Miss Ernestine would walk through the lobby of the hotel, large and impressive and dressed in a black dress with a bit of white lace and very dignified, with the bankroll pinned in her corset, followed by Miss Cora, slighter and with a face that some called tragic, with a small amount of money, not in her corset, but in her purse; and they would eat all of their meals in the hotel dining room and be called Miss Cuthrell by the waiters. They would walk, on sunny afternoons, on Wilshire Boulevard, looking into the shop windows and sometimes going into the shops to look and sometimes, less frequently, to buy, and on Thursdays they would take a bus to visit the Grahams in Pasadena, and on Mondays they would visit some distant relatives of their mother in Long Beach.

It was a pleasant pattern of existence for them that had been disrupted, shattered, by the new room. Eventually, they knew, the people who were in their old room, a Swiss and his wife, would leave. Then they could fit perfectly into the pattern again. But the Swiss and his wife, who were considered somewhat mysterious and aloof by many at the hotel, were staying much longer than anyone had thought. The Swiss and his wife would go in and out of the hotel at odd hours, and they struck up no friendships with the other guests. "Just when do we get our old room?" Miss Ernestine would ask the hotel manager, while Miss Cora looked the other way; and the hotel manager would tell her that the Swiss were sure to leave almost any day. They had already stayed much longer than anyone had expected.

One night matters reached a crisis. Miss Ernestine and Miss Cora were returning from Long Beach after seeing the Morriszes, the distant relatives there, and on the way back they had a fierce argument. Miss Ernestine was very irritable because of a call Miss Cora had failed to make to a friend of theirs, Mrs. Partridge, as she had been told to do. It was night when they returned. A band was playing for the opening of a new market and the spotlights were sending their long beams into the sky.

In their room they took baths and Miss Ernestine unpinned the money from her corset and placed it under her pillow, talking continually while Miss Cora attempted to read. Miss Cora looked out of the window. She held the book in her lap, opened to page nine. She could see nothing but a light in a room across the court. They were right next to the elevator. That was another thing that was wrong.

It was then that they heard some people in the room next to theirs. They had never been bothered previously in this fashion. It was a man and a woman, and they heard the man say something to the woman that they had not heard since they were little girls. It was an expression that they thought they would never hear again. At least they knew that it was an expression which would never be addressed directly to either of them. Miss Cora was no longer looking out of the window. Miss Ernestine was standing by the bed that let down from the wall. She was wearing an old-fashioned nightgown. They heard the man use the same expression again, and then he laughed. The woman was talking to him. Her voice was soft, but they could hear it. Then they heard a strange noise that they had never heard before, not even when they were little girls. The bed squeaked.

Miss Ernestine was quivering. "Animals!" she said.

Miss Cora was looking out of the window. She had closed her book.

"Animals!" Miss Ernestine said again. "And you! You're the one who's responsible for this!"

"Oh, Ernestine!"

"If you'd only had enough sense to write for reservations, we'd never have to put up with this. We'd be back in our old room."

"Don't listen to them. Pretend they aren't there."

"Don't listen to them! How can I help listening to them?" She stood for a moment looking at the wall as though she wished to tear it down. "I'm going to pound on that wall!" she said.

"No, Ernestine, no! You mustn't."

"I'm going to pound on that wall!"

"No, no!" Miss Cora hurriedly rose from her chair and took Miss Ernestine by the arms. "No, you mustn't, you mustn't!" she said.

They were looking at each other. Their faces were close to each other. Miss Ernestine was breathing heavily. There was a great tenseness in her arms.

"Let go of me!" she said.

"Tell me you won't do it."

"Let go of me!" Miss Ernestine commanded.

Miss Ernestine broke away. She stood in the middle of the room, glaring at her sister. Her breath came fast. "Get out!" Miss Ernestine was shouting. "Get out of this room!"

Miss Cora looked at her.

"Did you hear me?" said Miss Ernestine. She was almost screaming with rage. "Get out! Get out!"

"Ernestine," Miss Cora said pleadingly.

"Get out of this room! I never want to see you again!"

There was a knock at their door.

"Who's there?" Miss Ernestine called out.

"Bellboy, miss. Is everything all right?"

"Yes, yes, of course. What's the matter?"

"It's pretty late, miss. Would you mind lowering your voice?"

Miss Ernestine was rigid. Her jaws quivered angrily as she looked about the room. They could hear the bellboy going away from the door. They heard him go down the hall to the elevator and then the sound of the elevator door opening and closing.

"Never in all my life!" said Miss Ernestine. "I will not stay under this roof another night. Come on, Cora, don't just stand there! Help me get packed. We're getting out right now."

"Ernestine——"

"Help me get packed!"

They paid the bill in full at the desk. Miss Ernestine had counted out the correct amount before pinning the roll back into her corset. They took a cab to a hotel where Miss Williamson, a friend of theirs, lived. It was a hotel for women guests only. In the morning they slept late and in the afternoon they went for an automobile ride with Miss Williamson and her brother, a man who sold raw motion picture film. They thought they would like it very well in the new hotel. They did not talk about their quarrel, and they did not talk about the man and woman they had heard in the other hotel the night before.



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Jokes will be judged by the editors of this publication. The right to publish any or all jokes is reserved. Decisions of the editors will be final. The winning wisecrack will be published the following month along with the lucky winner's name.

THIS MONTH'S WINNER

Joe Boner

Dean, to new janitor of girl's dormitory: "Why didn't you come around last Friday and draw your week's wages, Ole?"

Ole: "You mean I get paid, tao?"

In the lobby of the new hotel there were many women with dogs on leashes. Their room was airy and bright and looked out on a quiet street. Miss Ernestine said that she thought it was one of the nicest rooms they had ever had anywhere. She said she thought they might as well plan to come back to it the following year. She asked Miss Cora what she thought of the idea, and Miss Cora said yes, she thought that that would be nice to do. Miss Cora said she would just as soon do that as anything else.

The Adventurer . . .

continued from page 18

And in the end, because I was tired out and sick of working, I fell for his supersalesmanship. We walked the streets for miles that evening, making our plans. I had over two hundred dollars and he had about eighty-five. "And this time we won't fail!" he told me. "We're both older and we can manage it now." I listened, his words falling pleasantly upon my ears. Summer had come round again and when I thought of the long grind in a hot office, the last of my resistance to Milt's oratory disappeared. "We'll meet, each with a small suit-case of clothes, on Monday," Milt said. "That'll give you until Saturday to quit and draw your pay. Just tell your folks you're going for a short vacation and then, when we're on a ship for Brazil, we'll drop them a line." And as he shook my hand hard, his intense stare was fixed upon mine.

So the next day I gave my place of employment two days' notice and on Saturday, drawing my pay, I quit. My parents were surprised, but said little. "I'm going away to the woods for a breather," I told them. "It's hot; I'm going up there to rest and to swim."

My mother, looking at me closely, said nothing, but my father, who understood me better, said, "If you find some good fishing, write a long letter home," and he looked like he, too, wanted to get away for a while.

A heavy rain came down in buckets that afternoon and all during the weekend and almost dashed the hope out of me. Milt must have had a premonition about my wavering, for on Sunday alone he phoned me four times, saying: "It's letting up, the sky is lightening, courage, courage!" But, to tell the truth, I was already weakening. When Milt phoned me, saying "Courage!" my courage somehow began to wilt. Added to this, my mother was making ginger cake and the odor of her good cooking started floating through the rooms.

The next morning, Monday, however, broke as clear as a bell. The sun blazed forth gloriously; I got up and packed. And after eating a hearty breakfast I sat around waiting Milt's call. My father, my older brothers and my sister called out "Have a good time!" before going to work. I gave my kid brother a quarter, saying, "Go out and play ball." At a little after nine my mother went out to shop, leaving the flat all to me. She had hardly gone out the door when the phone began to ring. "Hello," I said eagerly, anxious to get going, to be gone. Then my mouth hung open, for I recognized Milt's mother's voice. "Mrs. McGuinness?" She must have been crying, for she had to stop to control herself. "No, she's not in," I answered timidly. "This is Mrs. Gilson," she told me, not recognizing my voice. "Isn't Mrs. McGuinness at home?"

"No—no, she isn't," I stammered. "She's just gone down to the butcher shop."

"Who is this talking? I've got to speak to her—please."

"This is Fred, Mrs. Gilson."

"Oh, Fred, dear Fred, you mere boy," she began, sobbing. "What did you let him influence you for?"

I held the receiver to my ear, thunderstruck, while Mrs. Gilson said, "Last night at the supper table Milt announced that you and he were going around the world."

"Why—why, that's a lie—" I protested.

"He said you two were going first to Brazil, then to Madagascar."

"That's—that's a lie," I repeated.

"Please, please come over," she begged me. "perhaps we can straighten this all out. He's gone to the bank to draw his savings. Oh, do please come over before he returns."

So again I hurried over. There was a doctor about to leave when I arrived, an old heavy gray-haired man, closing his satchel. "This is Doctor Collins," Mrs. Gilson said, her eyes brimming. "He's come to see if I'm all right."

I certainly felt guilty, waiting for the doc to go. "Listen," I told Mrs. Gilson, after the doctor departed, "I was only kidding Milt, honest I was."

Mrs. Gilson, through her tears, said, "He has such a strong personality, he easily influences other boys."

"Not me," I told her stoutly. "He didn't know it, but I was kidding him all along. Not me!"

Mrs. Gilson, who really has a lot of charm, looked at me and smiled. "I'm sure you were," she told me, smiling. "When I called up your house, I was only going to speak to your mother to make sure."

"Whew, it's warm in here," I said suddenly, though the truth was the morning was cool with breezes after the two-day rain. But I began to feel so uncomfortable that, sure enough, I began to sweat! I looked at my watch, wondering if I could beat it before Milt returned.

"Pardon me," I told Mrs. Gilson, "but I've got to be going—" "But what about Milt?" Won't you wait until he comes?"

"Well, no, I've got no time," I answered, hedging. "But, if you want, I'll explain it to him in a note." And right then and there I wrote that letter which made us, from that moment, no longer friends but enemies. It was harmless enough, I had thought then, but my supposition, it turned out, was all wrong. I scribbled in a hurry, hoping he wouldn't return until I was through. "Dear Milt. I changed my mind. I'm going swimming this afternoon at Clarendon Beach. I'd like to teach you that new way of doing the overhand crawl I do so good. Your friend, Fred." Then I went home, unpacked my suitcase and told my mother I had changed my mind about going to the woods until next week.

I was just finishing unpacking when the phone began to ring. I stiffened all over. "I'll take it," I told my mother, going over and lifting the receiver from the hook. "Hello," I said cautiously, and then I knew we were no longer friends. For fifteen minutes, he ranted over the wire, calling me names and ending up with, "Traitor, coward, dog!" For fifteen minutes he burned up the wire, then, exhausted by his tirades, he slammed up on me for good.

And that was the last of our friendship, I'm forced to relate. The weeks, the months began fading into years. I went back to work once more for the wholesale coffee company and eventually they forgave my transgression and regarded me as a normal youth again. Getting studious, I took up more advanced courses in accounting during the evenings and the management took a fresh interest in me. When I finished my courses another slight raise was forthcoming and then they started sending me travelling again. As a full-fledged accountant, I was sent to their branch offices all over the world, first to Mexico City, then to the Indies, and finally to the Argentine for a spell. And for the last dozen years or so I have been more or less on the go. I can't say that I like it, but the pay is fairly good.

While away from home, I hear quite often from my family, especially from Jack. Jack, the blindest of my brothers, writes me three or four times a year. (Jack owns a tire shop, sells batteries and fixes flats.) As President of the Logan Square Boosters, he inaugurated last winter a luncheon series for the members and wrote me all about it, describing its great success. It seems that, to top the luncheons off, the Boosters decided to have speakers after their meals and their organization being a prominent neighborhood fraternity, the speakers get publicity in the *Logan Square News*. "We have business men, bankers and sometimes men from the professions address us," Jack wrote me, giving me details; then one day he sent me a small clipping, without an accompanying word. My curiosity, at a low point as I perused it, rose to a high pitch at once. There, at the head of the column, was a photo I recognized! The passage of fifteen years, far from dimming my memory, had but sharpened it the more. It was a photo of my former friend, frowning with his proud eyes. And underneath the half-tone, a caption, "Vagabond, Lecturer and Adventurer", stared forth in bold type. My eyes, swiftly roving, read all the details. ". . . local dentist, amateur singer, former scout-master and sponsor of the bi-monthly hikers club, spoke at the forty-first weekly luncheon of the Logan Square Boosters and spoke well, giving his listeners vivid pictures of his career. The story of a trip, during which he had experienced some hair-raising adventures as he was journeying to Niagara some years ago as a boy proved by far the most exciting . . ."

CONTRIBUTORS

ALBERT HALPER, who contributes a story to this issue, published his first novel, *Farewell to the Rising Sun* (A Story of Love and Sacrifice Along the Heroic Polish Frontier), as a satire on Ernest Hemingway in Richard Johns' advance-guard magazine, *Pagany*. His second novel, *Union Square*, was a critical success and since then he has published many volumes of fiction including *The Chute*, *The Foundry*, *On the Shore*, etc. Mr. Halper is now living in New York City.

JAMES T. FARRELL, born in Chicago in 1904, has published many novels treating of childhood and young manhood on the streets of that city. His trilogy, *Studs Lonigan*, which is now included in the Modern Library, has been recently issued in England. His other works include *World I Never Made* and *My Days of Anger*, which is to be issued by the Vanguard Press in October. The fiction by Farrell published in this issue is from the work last named.

ROBERT McALMON'S latest book publication is *Being Genuises Together*, a volume of literary reminiscence issued by Secker and Warburg (London) in 1938. As editor of *Contact* and of the Contact Editions (Paris), he promoted the writing of Gertrude Stein, James Joyce, Kay Boyle, Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams, Ernest Hemingway and others. His poetry and fiction is collected in such volumes as *The Village*, *North America: Continent of Conjecture*, *The Portrait of a Generation*, *Not Alone Lost*, *Post-Adolescence*, etc. McAlmon escaped Nazi-occupied France and traveled deviously through Spain and Portugal until he arrived at Lisbon. There he recovered some gold coins from his shoes, bought a ticket to America, and returned to New York, from which point (shortly before Pearl Harbor) he left for Phoenix where he now lives.

WILLIAM MARCH wrote the distinguished book of stories dealing with American experience in the First World War entitled *Company K*. It is now a collector's item. He has published many novels. He is originally from Mobile, Alabama, but now lives in New York.

DR. WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS is one of the five or six most important poets now living. *The Complete Collected Poems* was issued by New Directions in 1939. He has published three novels: *Voyage to Pagan*, *White Mule*, and *In the Money*. His essays in literary criticism which were collected under the title of *In the American Grain* have been issued recently in the New Classics Series. He lives in Rutherford, New Jersey.

JORGE AMADO is a Brazilian writer. This is his first appearance in English translation.

LANGSTON HUGHES, author of *The Weary Blues*, *Shakespeare in Harlem*, etc., is well known as a poet. His novel, *Not Without Laughter*, although first published in 1930 is still selling. The first volume of his autobiography, *The Big Sea*, appeared in 1940.

DR. ALAN SWALLOW, poetry editor of the *New Mexico Quarterly Review*, is at present a member of the English faculty at Western State College of Colorado. His first book of poems is to be issued shortly by the James A. Decker Press.

MAJOR MERRILL MOORE, now stationed somewhere in the Pacific, is reputed to have written more sonnets than any man who ever lived. *M: A Thousand Sonnets*, being only a selection of his work in this form, was issued by Harpers Brothers. Other volumes of verse by this former member of the Fugitive Group at Nashville, including *The Noise That Time Makes*, have established Dr. Moore as one of the best of American poets writing today.

KENNETH PATCHEN, American *enfant terrible*, has shocked American critics out of their usual lethargy and elicited unusual praise—as well as condemnation—for his *Before the Brave*, *The Journal of Albion Moonlight*, *The Dark Kingdom*, etc. His next book of poetry is to be issued by Harpers Brothers.

ANDRÉ SPIRE, distinguished dean of French free verse, is now in this country teaching at the New School for Social Research. A socialist and formerly a member of Blum's Popular Front government, he has published over twelve volumes of poetry in the more than seventy years of his life.

ALAIN BOSQUET is a young Belgian poet. He fought in the Belgian army but escaped encirclement at Dunkerque, joined the French army and was sent to the French Alps where he fought for a few days against the invading Italian Fascists. Escaping capture, he walked to Marseilles and shipped out to America by way of Africa. He is now in the U. S. Army Medical Corps and is stationed at El Paso.

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NORMAN MACLEOD, Assistant Professor of English in charge of the Creative Writing program at the University of Maryland, has published three books of poetry and two novels, the most important of which is *The Bitter Roots* (Smith & Durrell), a treatment of adolescence in the Bitterroot country of Montana during the first world war. His poetry has been translated into seven languages and published in twenty-one countries.

LOUIS ZUKOFSKY, American poet and author of *55 Poems*, edited the Objectivist Number of *Poetry* (Chicago) and *An Objectivist Anthology* (Paris). He formulated the principles of Objectivism.

CRIEFF WILLIAMSON, young Scots poet, until recently with the British Air Commission in Washington, is now in the British Army.

DENIS DEVLIN is the author of *Intercessions* (London), 1937. Since arriving in this country three years ago, he has published poetry in the *Southern Review*, *Poetry* (Chicago), *The New Republic*, and two editions of *Calendar*, the poetry anthology edited by Norman Macleod.

VERNON WATKINS, young Welsh poet, is along with Henry Treece the most important poetic development in Great Britain since Auden-Spender-Lewis and Dylan Thomas.

HUGH MACDIARMID is the most important Scottish poet now living. Author of many volumes of poetry and criticism, he edited recently for Macmillan (London and New York) *A Golden Treasury of Scottish Poetry*. He lives in the Shetland Islands.

JORGE CARRERA ANDRADE at fifteen was editor of *La Idea* (Quito, Ecuador). He has led an active life as a journalist and diplomat in Germany, France, Spain, Peru, China, Japan, etc. Since 1940 he has been Consul General of Ecuador in San Francisco.

CESAR VALLEJO, Peruvian poet, left his native land for Europe in 1923. Living in extreme poverty first in Spain and then in France, he occupied himself with journalism. The Spanish Civil War affected him profoundly; on his deathbed the word "Spain" was constantly on his lips. His last book was set up by the soldiers of the Loyalist Army of the East and printed on paper which they themselves made, but the entire edition was destroyed by enemy action. The poems were posthumously printed in Mexico in 1940.

PABLO NERUDA, Chilean poet, is one of the best known names in contemporary Latin American poetry. He has traveled extensively in Europe and the Orient and was in the consular service, stationed first at Madrid, then in Calcutta and Rangoon. At present he is in Mexico. Technically, his later work represents a break with symbolism, but it does not fall into the conventional surrealist pattern.

W. GORDON ZEEVELD is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Maryland.

RUDOLFO USIGLI is one of the younger Mexicans. He studied for a while in the Yale Dramatic School and wrote a play, *In Half Tones*, which is said to be one of the most important plays ever written by a Mexican writer.

PIERRE EMMANUEL is one of the outstanding poets of the younger generation. He won critical acclaim after the armistice with books like *Jours de Colere*. The poem used in this issue was smuggled out of occupied France.

DORIAN COOKE is a young Cornishman who associated himself with the New Celtic Renaissance.

JOHN PRICHARD is a young Welsh poet.

RUTHVEN TODD is a young Scottish novelist and poet.

NORMAN McCAIG has contributed poetry to Hugh Macdiar-

mid's *The Voice of Scotland*, and to *View, Wales, Life and Letters Today* (London), *Calendar*, etc.

SHIRLEY ARMSTRONG is a student at the University of Maryland.

H. R. HAYS contributed many of the translations which were used in Dudley Fitts' *An Anthology of Latin American Poetry* (New Directions). Yale University Press is bringing out his *Twelve Spanish-American Poets*. His first novel, *Stranger on the Highway*, was published last month by Little, Brown & Co.

ANGEL FLORES works for the Pan American Union.

EDWIN HONIG is a Guggenheim Fellow and lives in West Lafayette, Indiana.

FEDERICO GARCIA LORCA, probably the most important of the Spanish poets who wrote in this century, was murdered by the Franco fascists.

F. PANFEROV, distinguished Soviet writer, is the author of *With Their Own Eyes*, *Brusski*, and other novels.

IVAN GOLL, an Alsatian poet, is now working with the French radio section of the Office of War Information in New York City.

YEVGENY PETROV is a Soviet writer.

WELDON KEES, young Colorado poet and novelist, is now in New York awaiting induction into the armed forces of the United States. His first book of poems is to be issued shortly by the Colt Press of San Francisco. As a novelist, he is under contract to Alfred A. Knopf.

WINETT DE ROHKA of Santiago, Chile, is editor of *Multitude*.

EUGENE VOROBYOV is a young Soviet novelist.

DONAGH MACDONAGH, of the younger Irish poets, is most admired by T. S. Eliot.

NIGEL HESELTINE, now in the R. A. F., is a Welsh poet.

LEO KASSIL is a novelist of the U. S. S. R.

ARONA PODNOS is a freshman at the University of Maryland.

E. PAULINE HOWLAND is a junior at the same institution.

W. G. MCCOLLOM is a member of the English faculty at the University of Maryland.

ARTHUR O'KEEFE is now a student at the University of Maryland, but will leave shortly for service in the armed forces of the United States. He comes from a well-known family of artists and writers.

ANN PATERSON is editor of *THE OLD LINE* and PAULINE HARDY is women's editor. Both are seniors at the University of Maryland and members of Mortar Board, senior women's honorary.

SERGEANT KARL SHAPIRO, young Baltimore poet, is now stationed in Australia. Recently he has been lecturing on American poetry at various Australian universities, and his second book of poetry is to be published shortly in Melbourne. His first collection was *Person, Place, and Thing* issued by Reynal & Hitchcock.

ROBERTA KELLS, RHODA ESKWITH, JACK ROTHSTEIN, and FAITH ELIZABETH FARQUHAR are students at the University of Maryland.

HARRY BACAS left the University of Maryland in February for service with the U. S. Army.

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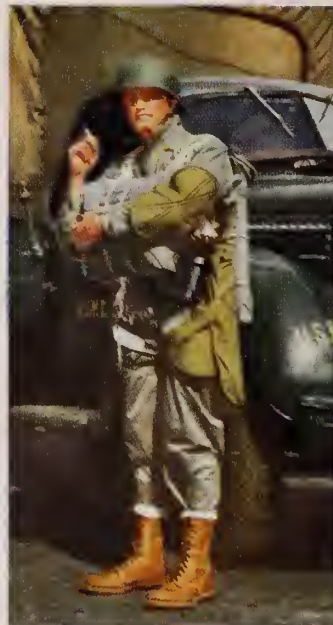
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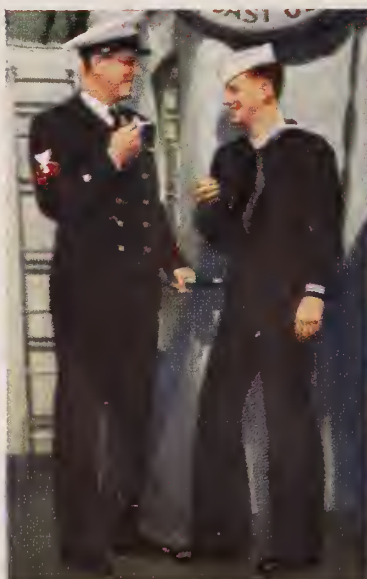
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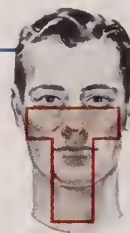
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